Lovely Strange Dark
CHIYOKO CHOCOLAT
BY KUJIRA
CHAPTER 1
Raws- Kalendel
Translation- Yuuko-san
Editing- zakkyliar
QC- hahhah42
lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

KUJIRA

ちよこチョコレート

chocolat de dieu

chiyoko chocolat

KUJIRA

chocolat de pieu

ちよこデコレート

chiyoko chocolat

CONTENTS

RECIPE 1
3

RECIPE 2
37

RECIPE 3
61

RECIPE 4
85

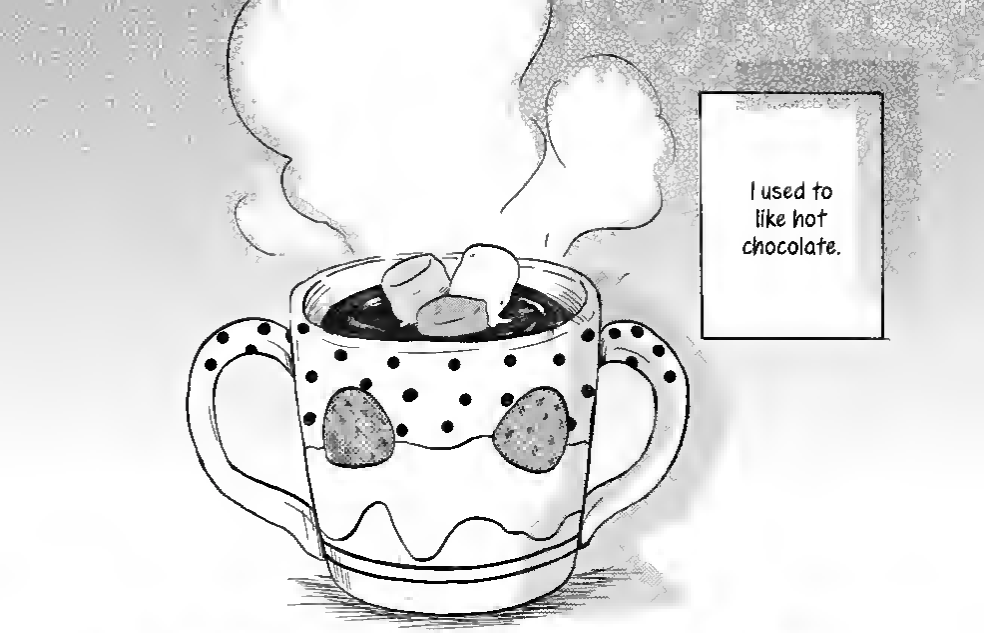
RECIPE 5
109

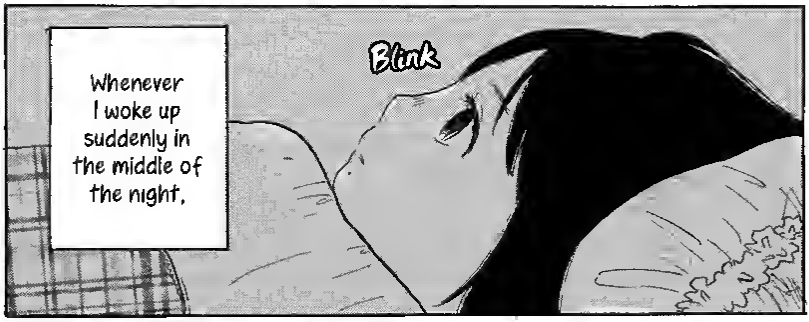
RECIPE 6
135

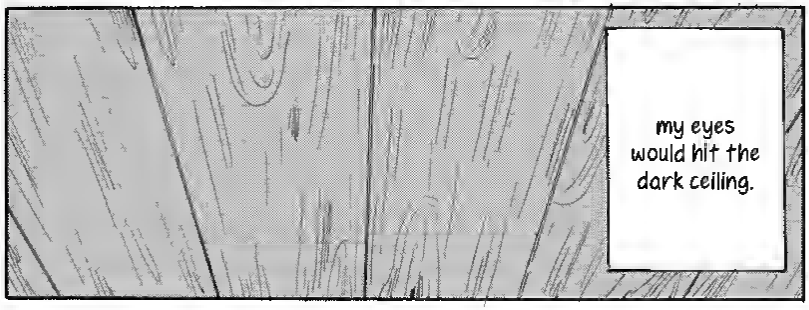
RECIPE 7
165

RECIPE 1

chocolat
de
dieu


I used to like hot chocolate.


Whenever I woke up suddenly in the middle of the night,
Blink


my eyes would hit the dark ceiling.

I was so scared that something bad would jump out at me.
WAAH!
MUMMY! DADDY!
MUMMY! DADDY!
CHIYOKO!
MUMMY! DADDY!

DID YOU HAVE A SCARY DREAM?
YEAH.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU'RE OKAY.
DADDY! MUMMY!
DEAR.
CHIYOKO, COME HERE. LET'S HAVE
SOME HOT CHOCOLATE.

My dad's hands were magical.
OKAY!
Tap
Rustle
Chocolate
The white milk
slowly turned the colour of chocolate.

THANKS.
GLUB
HERE!
Glow
HERE YOU ARE. FINALLY DONE.
Tap
HURRY!
HURRY!

White marsh-mallows,
pink marsh-mallows,
blue marsh-mallows
The way they melted and blended into each other
HEY, SIT DOWN BEFORE YOU START DRINKING IT.
was like looking at a picture book. It calmed me down.
So did

the sweet smell of my dad's hands.
Magical hands that calmed me down.
HAHAHA. YOU HAVE A CHOCOLATE MOUSTACHE.
Huff
My mum's hands smelled sweet, too.

I'm sure it's because she was always holding hands with my dad.
Magical hands

that made sparkling brown jewels
which melted into the customers' smiles.

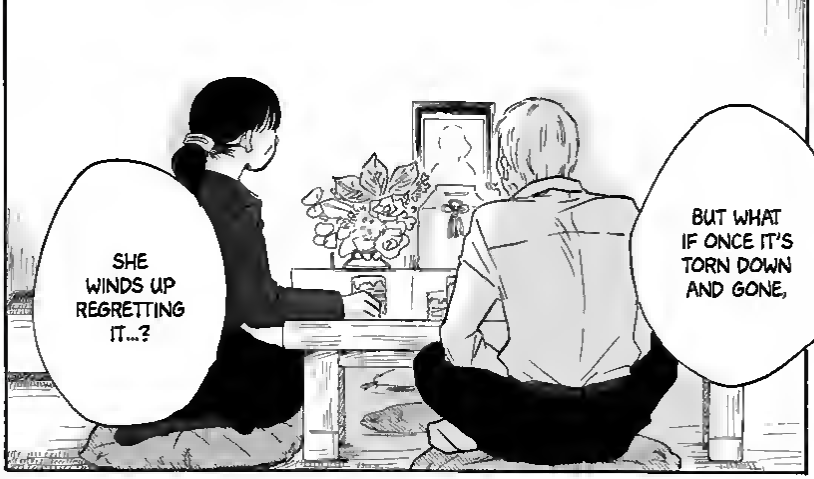
My mother passed away.
COME HERE, CHIYOKO. I MADE SOME TEA.

YOU DID GOOD TODAY.
Tap
WE CAN FINALLY TAKE A BREATHER.
YOU SHOULD TAKE IT EASY FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.
...I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO THANK THE PEOPLE AROUND TOWN WHO HELPED OUT.
THAT'S TRUE. BUT IT'S ALREADY LATE. YOU WOULD ONLY END UP BOTHERING THEM. DO IT TOMORROW.
...OKAY.

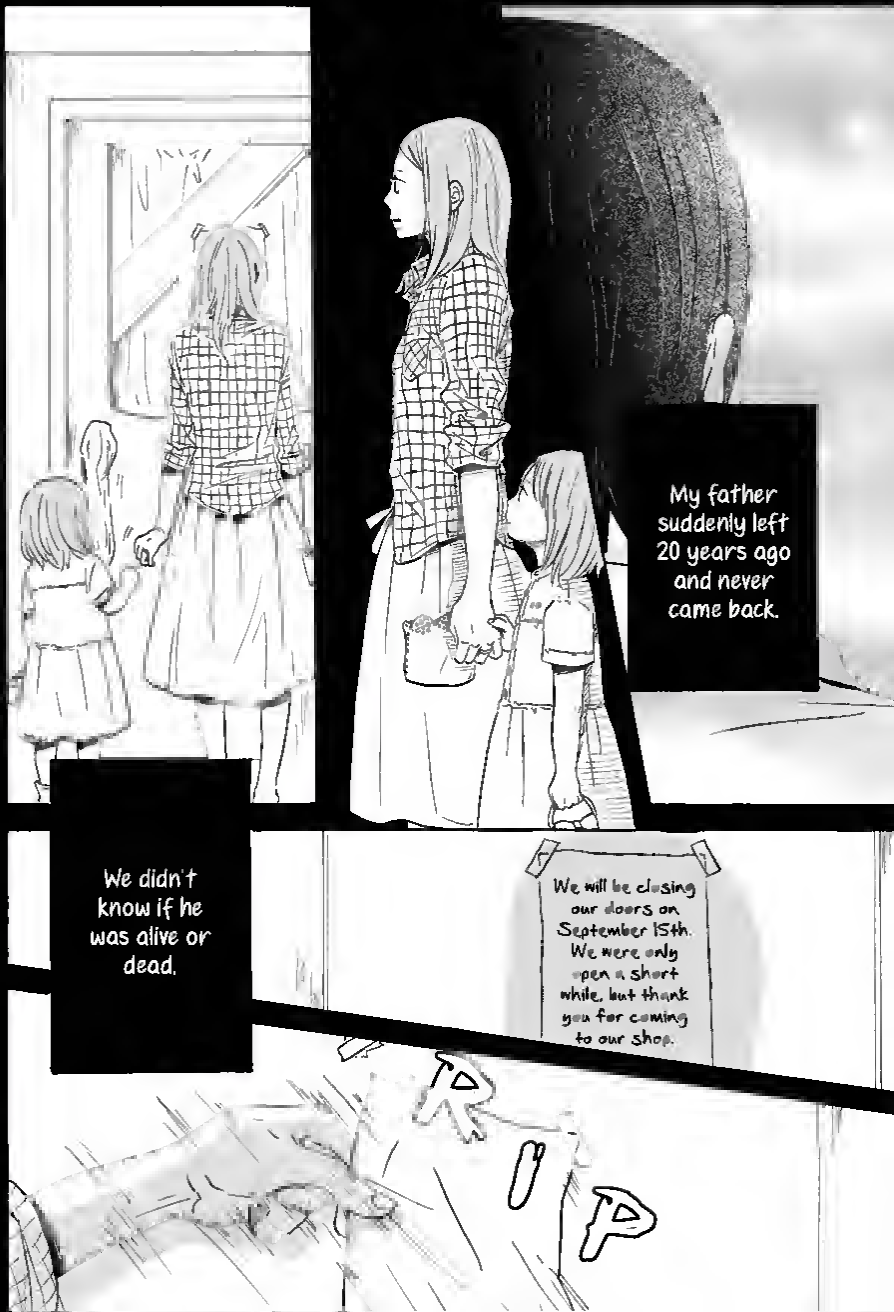
I'm now 25,
and I like bitter tea mare than hat chacalate.
I don't drink that sickeningly sweet treat anymore.
WELL THEN, I GUESS I'LL GO TO BED...
GO AHEAD. I'LL CLEAN UP.
OKAY.
GOOD NIGHT.
GOOD NIGHT.

OH.
GRANDPA,
SINCE MUM'S GONE,
IT SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT TO TEAR DOWN DAD'S SHOP, RIGHT?
HUH... OH—
UMM, CHIYO? THERE'S ...
GOOD NIGHT.

EVEN IF I TOLD HER, SHE WOULD OBJECT TO IT...
...WELL—
WHAT! YOU HAVEN'T TOLD HER ANYTHING ABOUT THE SHOP, DAD?
IF LEAVING HER FATHER'S SHOP THERE
HAS CAUSED HER SUCH DISTRESS THIS WHOLE TIME,
IF IT WERE GONE WITHOUT A TRACE.
THEN PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER


SHE WINDS UP REGRETTING IT...?
BUT WHAT IF ONCE IT'S TORN DOWN AND GONE,

I don't get scared anymore
when I look at the ceiling in the darkness.


My father suddenly left 20 years ago and never came back.
We didn't know if he was alive or dead.
We will be closing our doors on September 15th. We were only open a short while, but thank you for coming to our shop.
RIP

CRUNCH
My mother never divorced him, and she left the shop as it was.
She waited for my dad until the day she died.
I THOUGHT HE HAD MAGICAL HANDS,
BUT IF HE COULDN'T EVEN MAKE ONE PERSON HAPPY

FLOP
WHAT'S THE POINT?
OH MY. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO, CHIYO.
IT WAS NOTHING. THANK YOU FOR ALL THE HELP.

..Feel better..
Feel better, huh.
FEEL BETTER, OKAY?
...YEAH.
How do I make myself feel better?
.....
ALL DONE.
I CAN PROBABLY GO BACK TO WORK TOMORROW...

.....
CACAO...
WAIT, WHY IS THERE SOMEONE AT DAD'S SHOP...?
I CAN SMELL
I'M NOT SOME CHILD THAT YOU CAN JUST TELL
TO "FEEL BETTER" ...
Rustle
Fwsh
HUH?

HELLO.
I'M GOING TO BE OPENING A SHOP HERE SOON.
WE'LL BE OPEN AT THE END OF THE WEEK, SO FEEL FREE TO STOP BY.
?
WHA...
WAIT, WHAT?

IT'S A CHOCOLATE SHOP.
OH, I KNOW.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY SOME?
THE SIGN IS STILL THE SAME...?!
PLEASE COME IN...
NO THANK YOU!
OH.
I HATE CHOCOLATE!!

BANG
Startle
GRANDPA!!
WHY IS THERE SOMEONE THERE?!
WEREN'T YOU GOING TO TEAR DOWN THE SHOP?!
PL-PL-PL-PLUS IT'S A CHOCOLATE SHOP!
CHIYO, CALM DOWN.
I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THIS!
Tap

IT SEEMS SHE LOOKED FOR A TENANT BEFORE SHE DIED...
KIYOKO RENTED IT OUT.
...WHY DID MY MUM... AND WHEN DID SHE...?
IF SHE LEFT IT TO YOU, YOU'D JUST TEAR IT DOWN, RIGHT?
WELL, THAT'S BECAUSE-
...WOULD THAT
REALLY MAKE YOU HAPPY?
...HUH?

.....
THERE'S NO POINT LEAVING A SHOP THERE THAT BELONGED TO SOMEONE WHO LEFT, RIGHT?!
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF IT DOES OR NOT...
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU...
"Mummy keeps crying."
SINCE HE LEFT... YOU HAVEN'T LAUGHED
OR CRIED AT ALL.
"I'll make it for her."
That's because...

MUMMY, HERE!
DRINK THIS!
ALL DONE!
YOU'LL FEEL BETTER.
.....
I DON'T WANT IT.

...they dried up a long time ago.

My mother
stayed inside that shop the whole time, as if she was in my dad's arms.

...OH.
IT'S OPEN.
.....
Clink
WELCOME.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY ONE?
EVEN JUST A BITE...
I'VE TOLD YOU!
I HATE CHOCO-LATE!
OH! YOU'RE FROM THE OTHER DAY!
YOU CAME BACK! I'M SO GLAD!
POP
MUNCH
IF YOU MUST KNOW! THIS SHOP IS...
HMM? THEN WHY DID YOU COME HERE?

THIS... FLAVOUR...
.....
IT'S MY DA...
...IT'S MITSURU KUBOTA'S ...?
WOW! FOR SOMEONE WHO HATES CHOCOLATE, YOU SURE DO KNOW YOUR STUFF!
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS FLAVOUR?! AND WHY HAVEN'T YOU CHANGED THE FRONT SIGN?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
...THIS SHOP
IS HERE TO RECREATE MITSURU KUBOTA'S CHOCOLATES.

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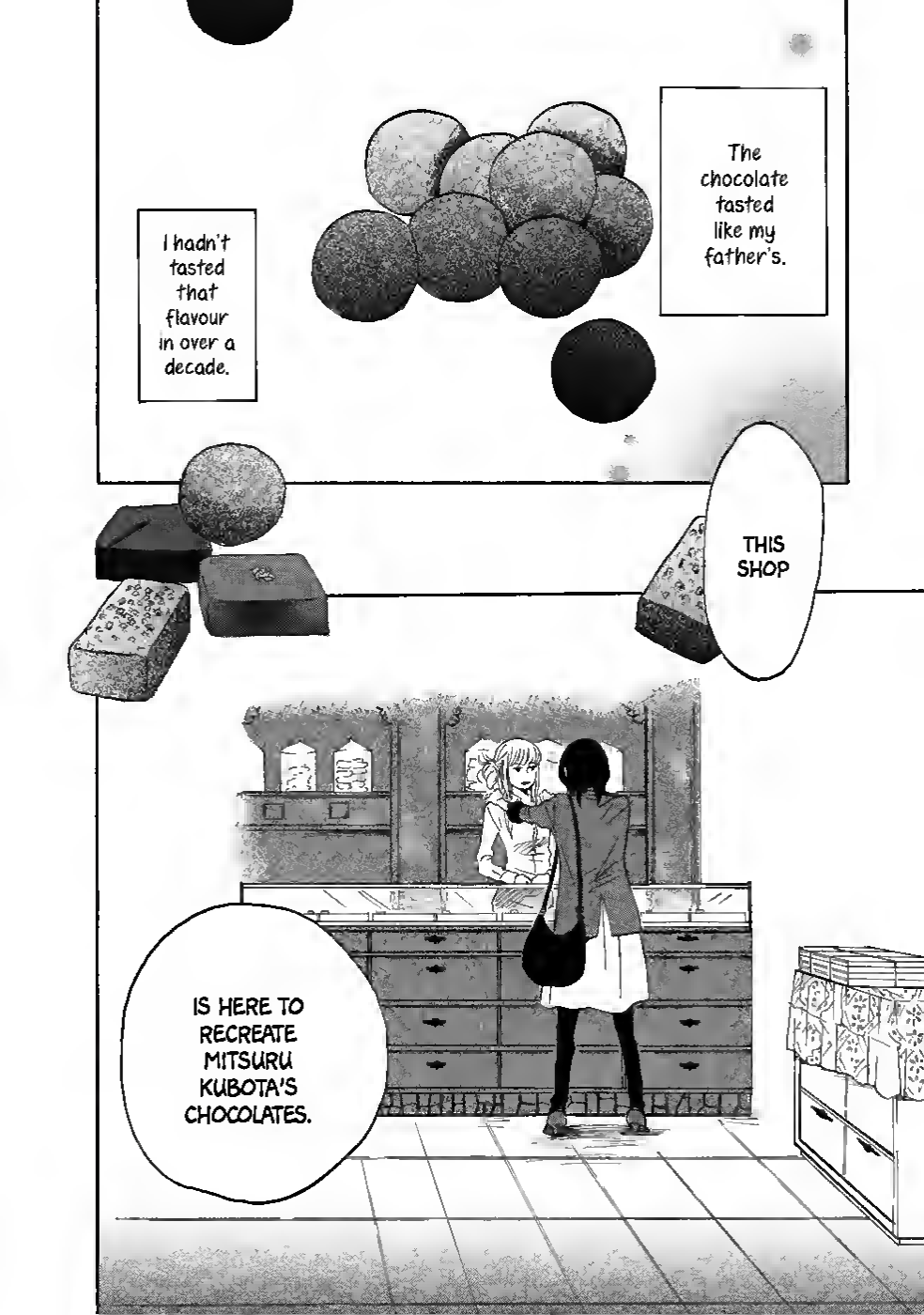
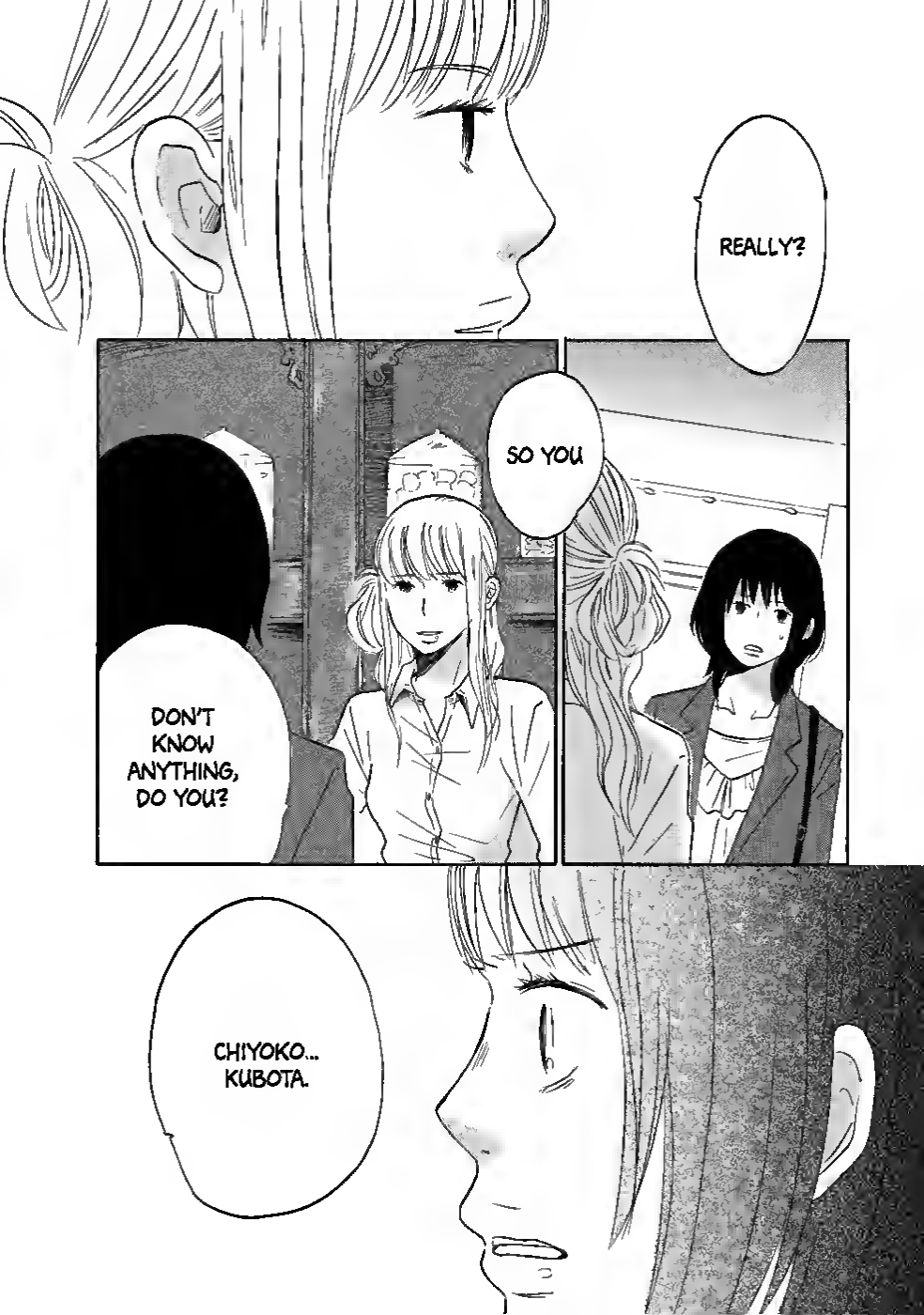
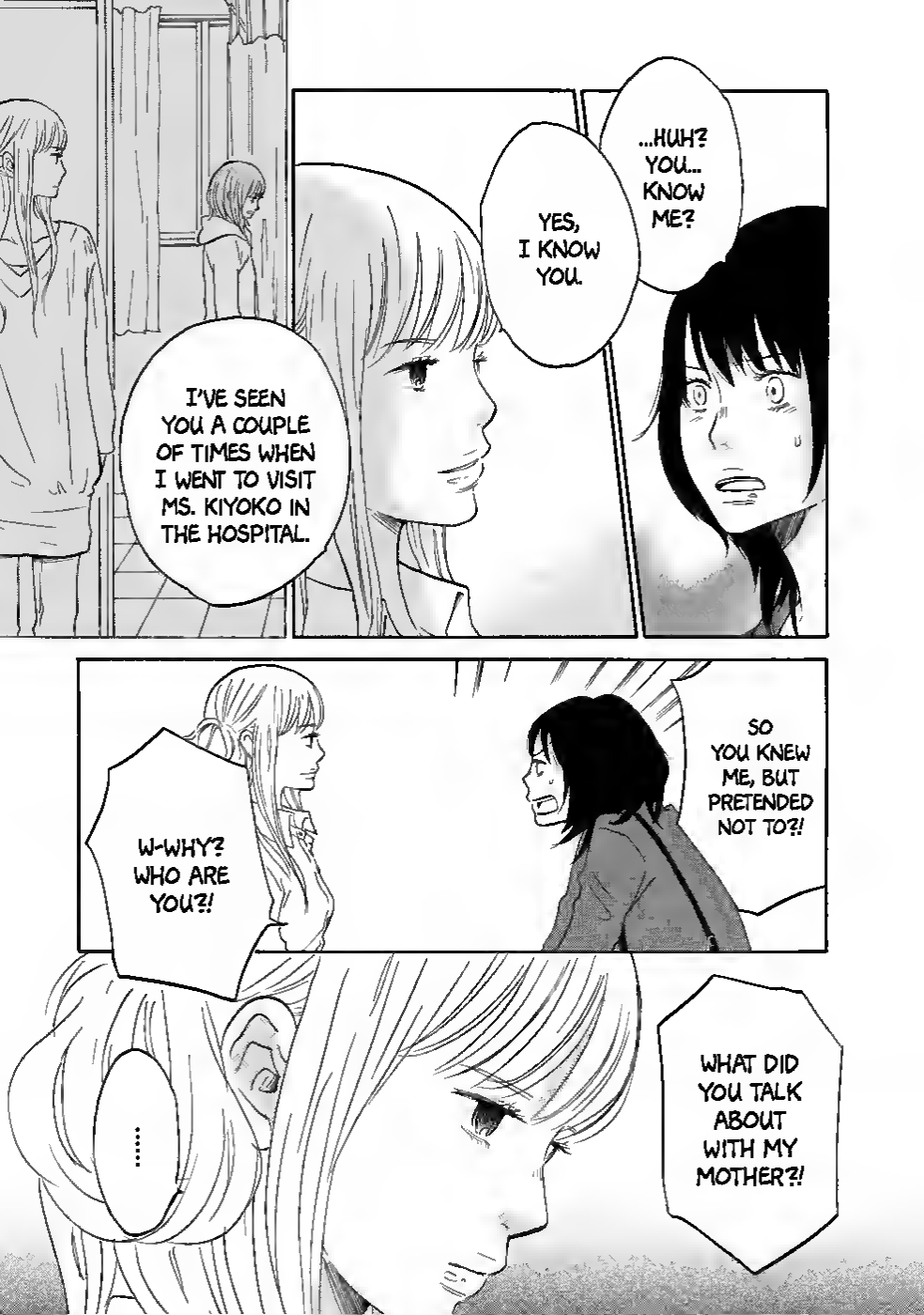
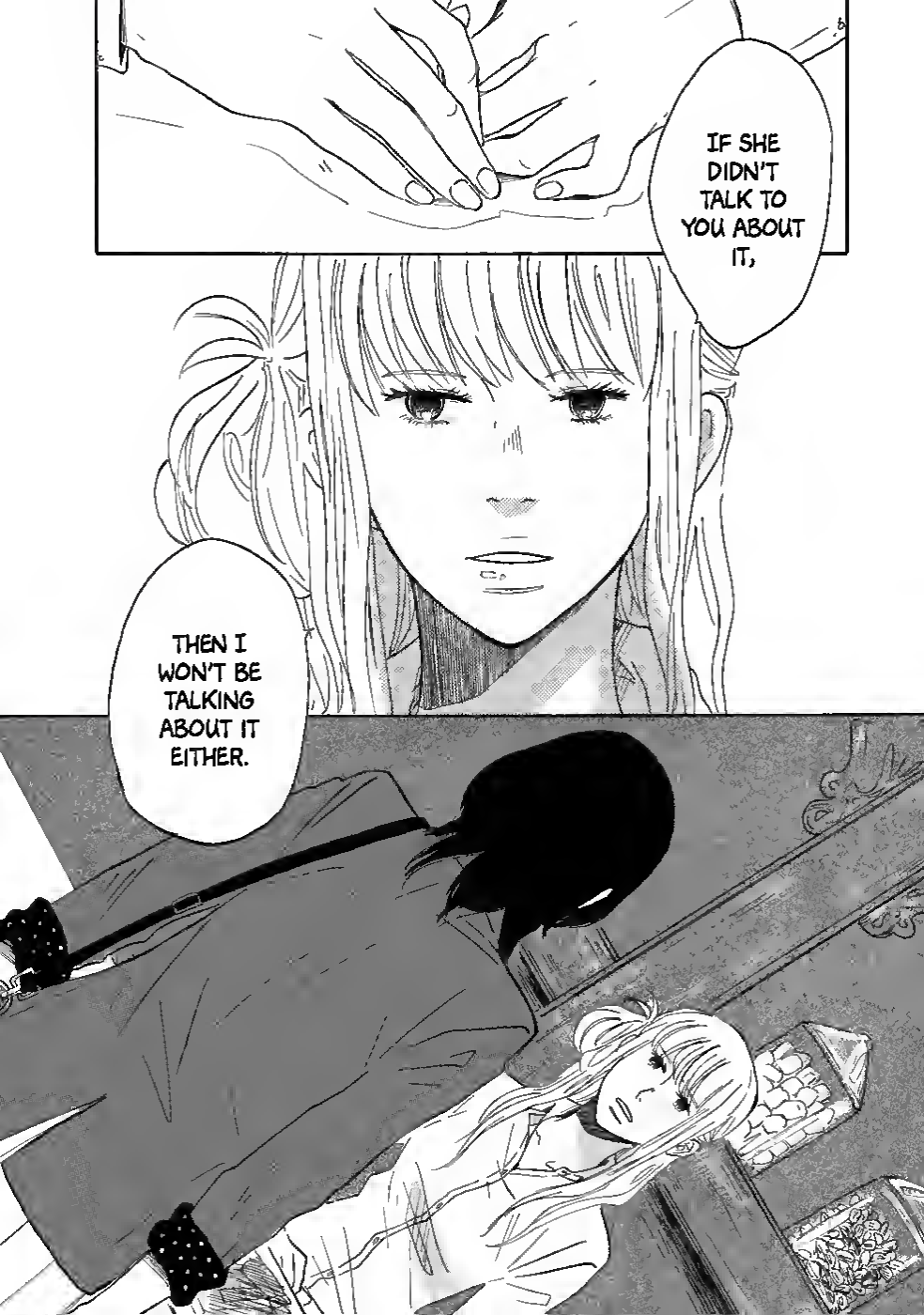
RECIPE 2


I hadn't tasted that flavour in over a decade.
The chocolate tasted like my father's.
THIS SHOP
IS HERE TO RECREATE MITSURU KUBOTA'S CHOCOLATES.

WH...
WHAT FOR...?


REALLY?
SO YOU
DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?
CHIYOKO... KUBOTA.


...HUH? YOU... KNOW ME?
YES, I KNOW YOU.
I'VE SEEN YOU A COUPLE OF TIMES WHEN I WENT TO VISIT MS. KIYOKO IN THE HOSPITAL.
SO YOU KNEW ME, BUT PRETENDED NOT TO?!
W-WHY? WHO ARE YOU?!
WHAT DID YOU TALK ABOUT WITH MY MOTHER?!
.....


IF SHE DIDN'T TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT,
THEN I WON'T BE TALKING ABOUT IT EITHER.

WHAT THE HELL...
WHY NOT?
ANSWER ME!
AND THEY'RE ALREADY DEAD!!
THEY WERE MY PARENTS, SO IT'S WELL IN MY RIGHTS TO KNOW, RIGHT?!
WHY DID MUM OPEN THIS CAFE AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO RECREATE DAD'S CHOCOLATES?!
WHY DID HE LEAVE
AND WHO'S MAKING THEM...?
IS IT MY DAD?!
IS HE ALIVE?!
MY MUM AND ME?!

ANSWER ME!!
HAA
HAA
HAA
...LIKE I SAID,
I CAN'T ANSWER YOU.
BUT WHY NOT?!
PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE

DID YOU EVER TRY TO LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR MOTHER WAS TRYING TO SAY?
DID YOU EVER TRY TO COMPRO-MISE?
...I DID.
BECAUSE YOU KEEP ASKING "WHY" WITHOUT TAKING THE TIME TO LISTEN TO ANYONE.
SHE THOUGHT THAT YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND.

No matter how much I walked towards my mother,
she just kept moving further away.
YOU DON'T KNOW ANY-THING...
NEITHER DO YOU.
.....

ARE YOU STILL OPEN?
YES.
COME ON IN!
...THANK YOU FOR STOPPING BY.
OH MY! THERE ARE SO MANY IT'S HARD TO CHOOSE.
PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME.
OH, RIGHT.
HMM...

...WHAT?
MY NAME IS CHIYOKO OKABAYASHI.
THERE IS ONE THING I CAN ANSWER.
SAME FIRST NAME! I HOPE WE CAN BE FRIENDS.
NO THANKS!
SLAM

NO WAY.
Step
DEFI-NITELY NOT.
HAA
HAA
THE SMELL OF CACAO IS STIFLING.
THE SMELL OF DAD.
THE SMELL OF MUM.

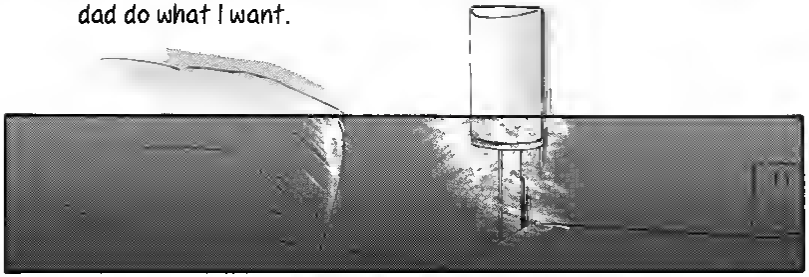
THE SMELL OF THAT WOMAN.
She kept going further,
I HAVE TO ERASE IT.
so I got tired and stopped walking.
I HAVE TO ERASE IT.
Tap

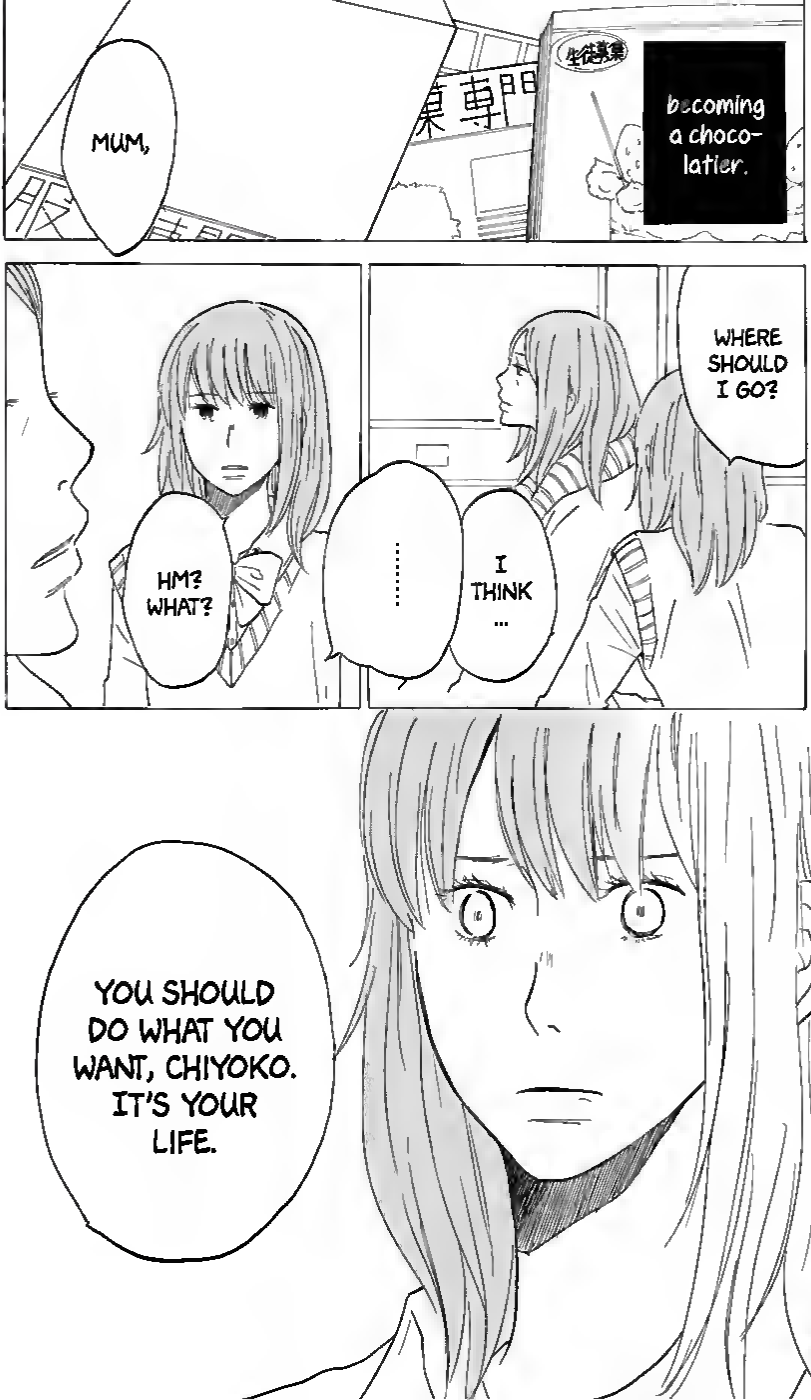
!
STUMBLE
I can't stand still.
WHOA!
Somewhere deep inside me,
that hot chocolate

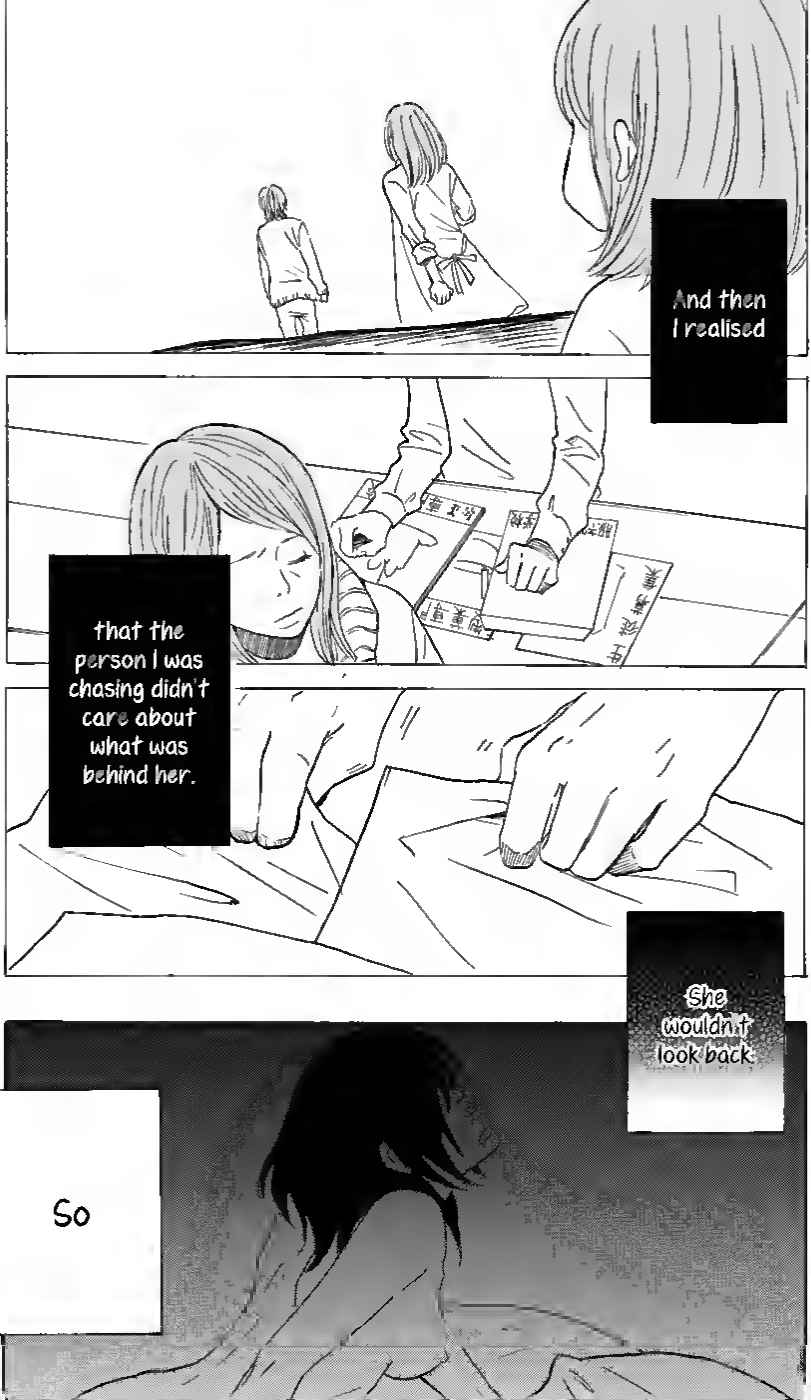
is still all over the floor.
Okumura Stationery
...I CAN'T TODAY.
WELL, MY KID'S HAD A FEVER SINCE THIS MORNING. SO, YOU KNOW, IT'S JUST NOT...
WHY NOT?

BUT YOUR WIFE IS AT HOME, RIGHT?
YEAH, BUT...
THEN IT'S FINE.
UH...
DON'T BE SELFISH, KUBOTA.
I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU.
HEY, MR. OGATA, I THINK I HAVE A FEVER TOO.
KUBOTA.
I DON'T THINK IT'LL GET BETTER UNLESS I'M WITH YOU.

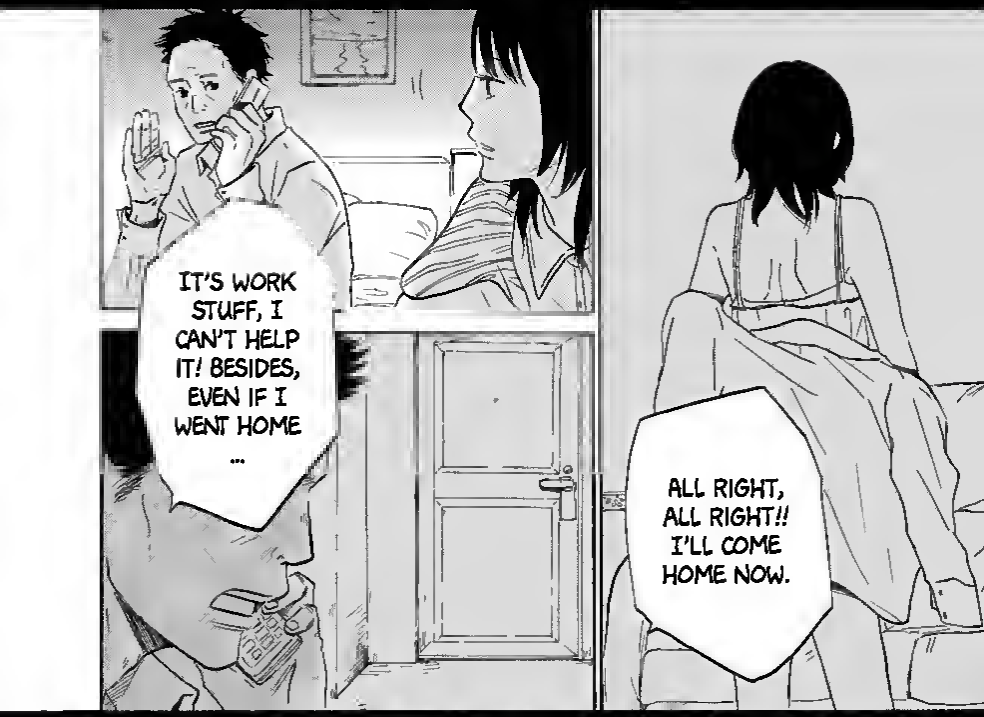
It's so easy to make your dad do what I want.



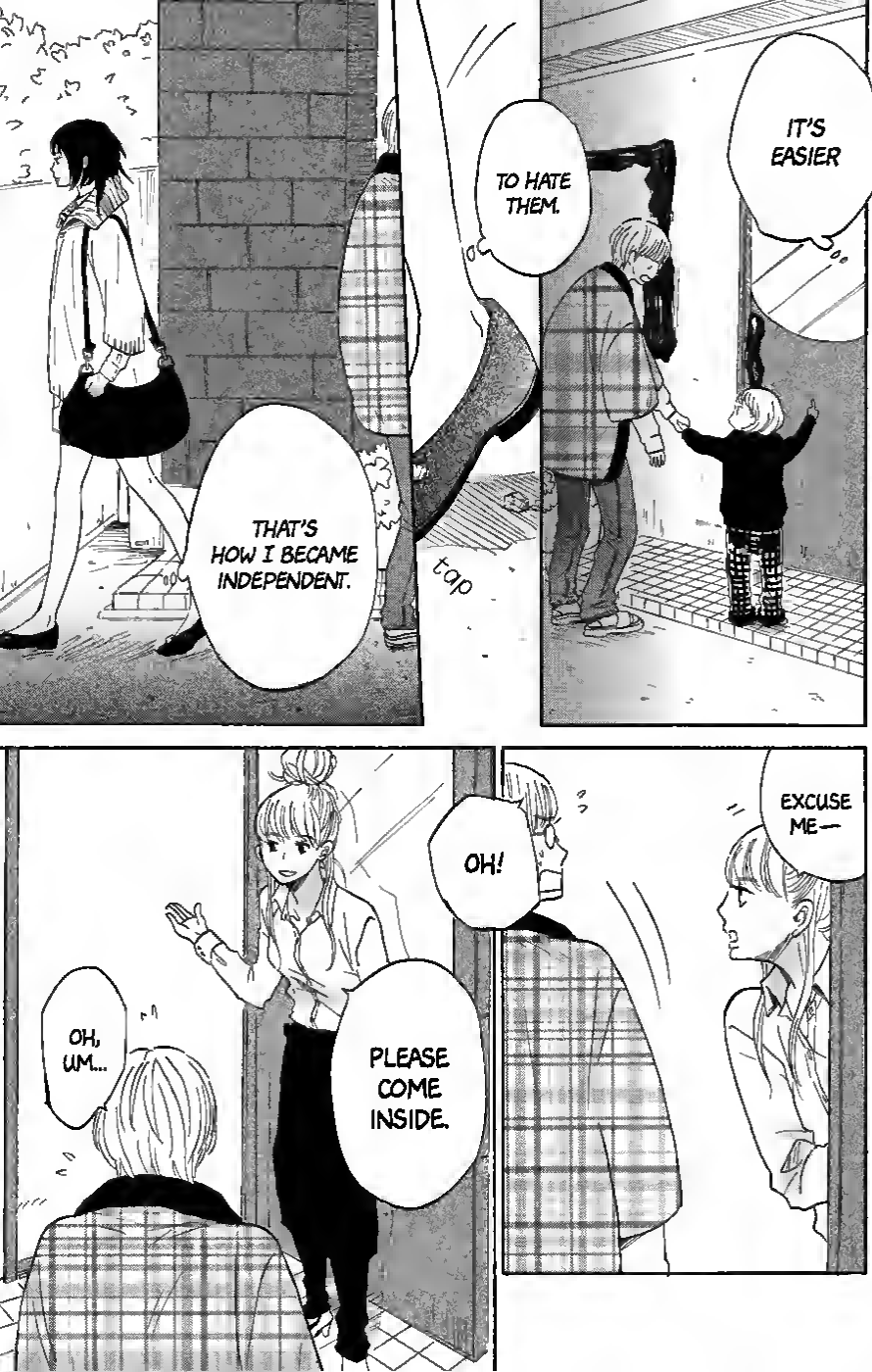

MUM,
becoming a choco-latier.
WHERE SHOULD I GO?
I THINK ...
.....
HM? WHAT?
YOU SHOULD DO WHAT YOU WANT, CHIYOKO. IT'S YOUR LIFE.


And then I realised
that the person I was chasing didn't care about what was behind her.
She wouldn't look back
So

I went out to find someone who would look at me.



Even if I don't love him.


THAT'S HOW I BECAME INDEPENDENT.
tap
TO HATE THEM.
IT'S EASIER
EXCUSE ME—
OH!
PLEASE COME INSIDE.
OH, UM...

SORRY!
OH.
SHE WON'T BE STOPPING BY TODAY, HUH.
THAT CHIYOKO.

Lovely Strange Dark

CHIYOKO CHOCOLAT

BY KUJIRA

CHAPTER 3

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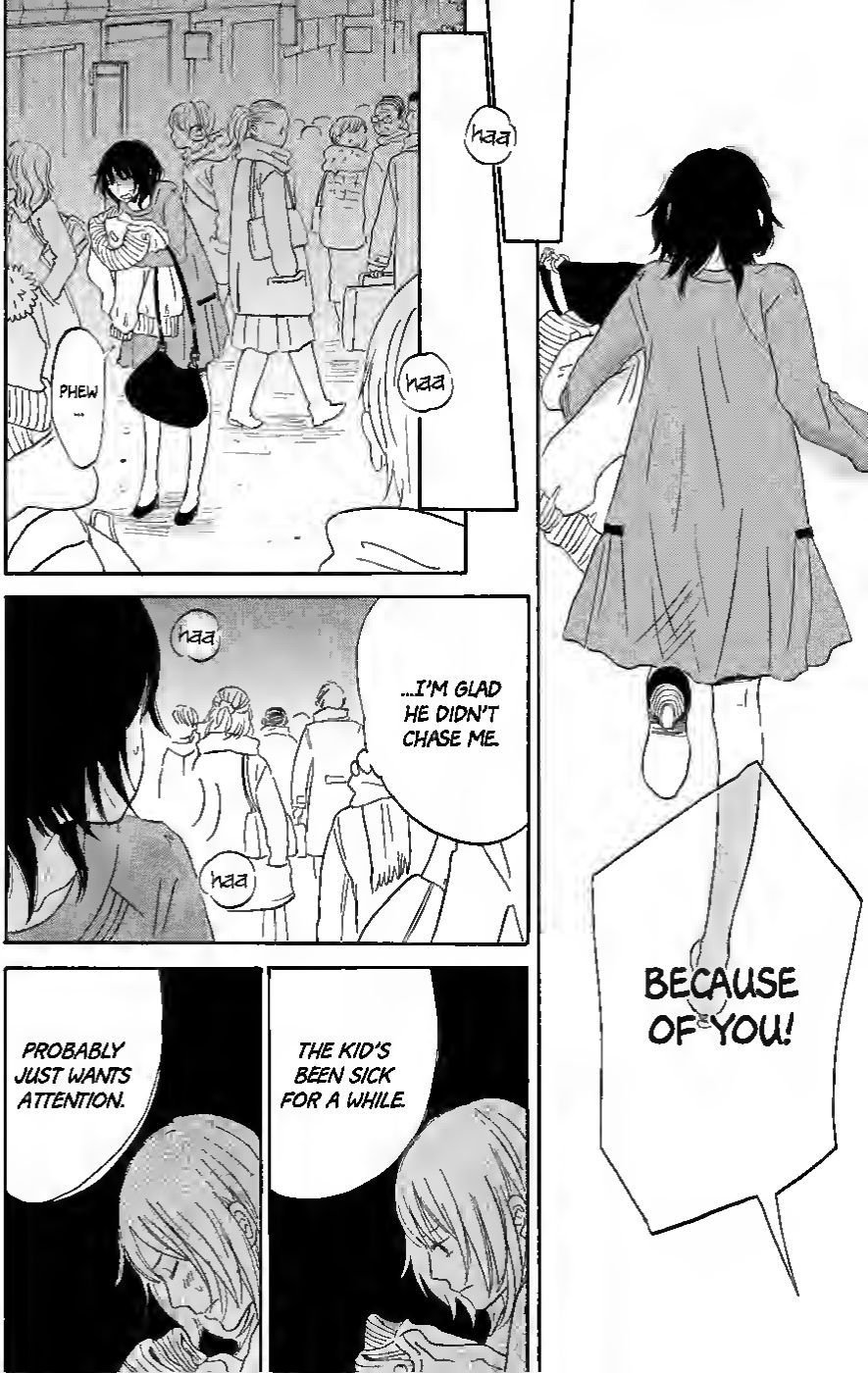
HANG IN THERE, KIYO!
How do I melt
gasp
gasp
gasp
this heart of mine,
now that it's become so stubbornly cold?
RECIPE 3

RECIPE 3

MY WIFE TOOK THE KID AND LEFT.
IS YOUR KID OKAY? IF THEY'VE BEEN SICK FOR A WHILE ...
PROBABLY JUST WANTS ATTENTION. IT'S HAPPENED BEFORE.
WHAT...?
THE KID'S BEEN SICK FOR A WHILE. SINCE SHE WORKS TOO, SHE WENT BACK HOME.
Well,
LET'S FORGET ABOUT MY LIFE.
NOW

SNAP
WE CAN SPEND MORE TIME TOGETHER.
KUBOTA ...
THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED—
I NEVER SAID THAT I WANTED YOU TO LEAVE YOUR WIFE
OR ANY-THING LIKE THAT!
WHAT THE HELL?!
HEY!

...HEY,
WAIT A SECOND...
YOU-
YOU
BANG
CAUSED THIS!!
BANG
THEY LEFT ME
HEY!


haa
PHEW...
haa
haa
...I'M GLAD HE DIDN'T CHASE ME.
BECAUSE OF YOU!
THE KID'S BEEN SICK FOR A WHILE.
PROBABLY JUST WANTS ATTENTION.

I guess it's about time...
I WANT TO GET PROPERLY DRESSED,
BUT THE MALLS ARE ALREADY CLOSED,
AND I'D BE UNCOMFORTABLE GOING INTO A CAFE...
Valentines
Restaurant
Chocolate Festival 6F
...OH.
I GUESS I CAN GET CHANGED AT THE TRAIN STATION.

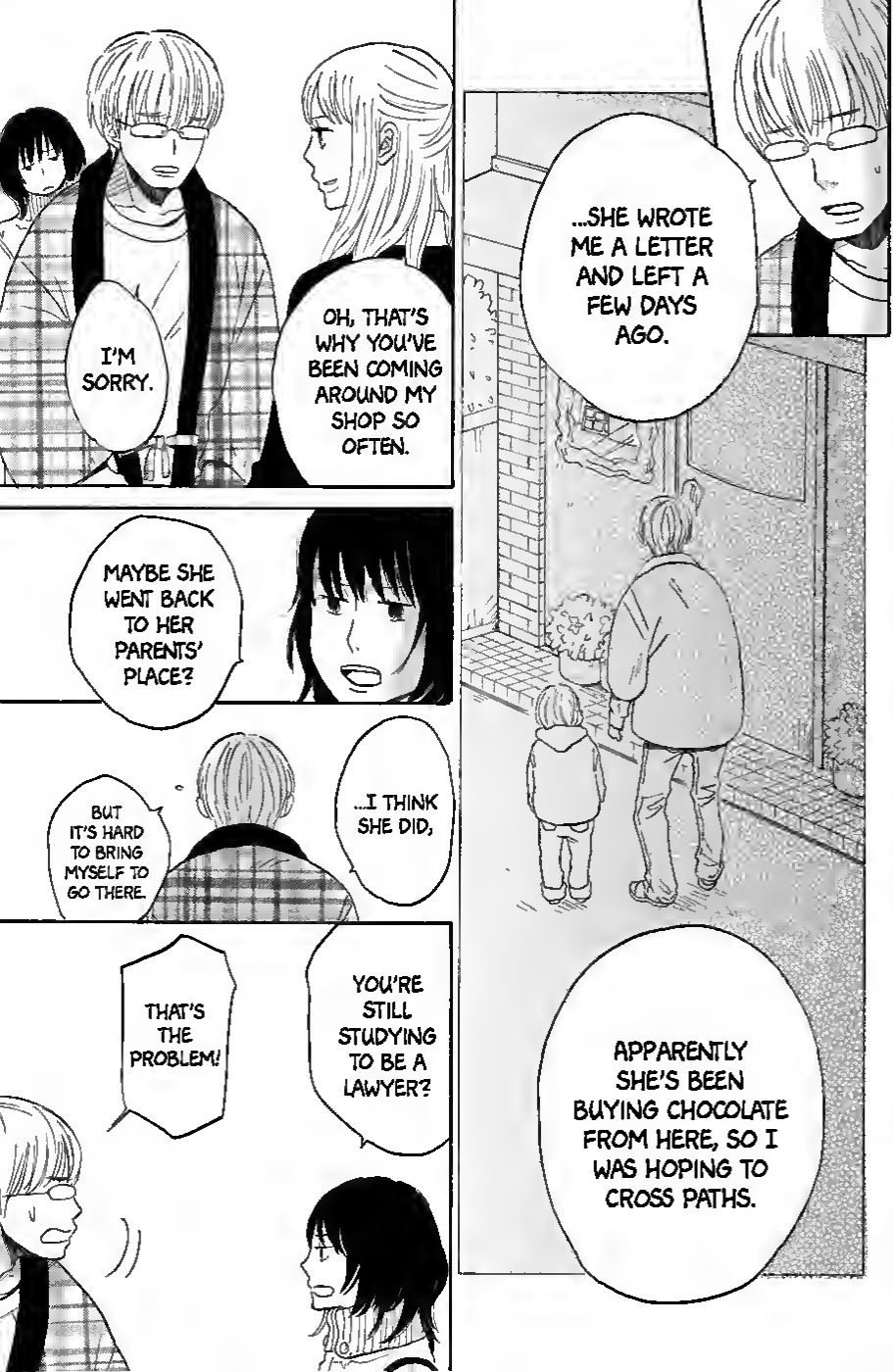
It's my least favourite season,
when the city is filled with chocolate.
HERE'S MORE...
CHIYOKO!!!
I LOOKED AT IT BY ACCIDENT.

KEN?!
Grab
GREAT TIMING! COME TO THE SHOP WITH ME.
IT'S AWKWARD GOING ALONE.
NO WAY!
WHY NOT?! IT'S YOUR SHOP, RIGHT?
IT IS AND IT ISN'T!!
KUH?!
THAT DOESN'T EVEN MAKE SENSE! COME ON!
Noooo
I SAID I DON'T WANT TO!!

HEY!
SORRY, WE'RE NOT TRYING TO...
EXCUSE ME~~
YOU'RE CAUSING A SCENE IN FRONT OF MY SHOP. IT'LL AFFECT MY BUSINESS.
C'MON!
IF YOU WANT TO COME IN, PLEASE DO.
YOU TOO, CHIYOKO.
.....

WOW! IT HASN'T CHANGED IN TWENTY YEARS!
YEAH.
RIGHT?
Ken
is seven years older than me. When we were younger, we ate chocolate at the shop and played together.
Role Playing
It's awesome you can eat chocolate for free
Free?
We became estranged after we grew up.
but he came to Mum's funeral with his wife Makoto and family
After Dad left, Ken took care of me.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?
...SO,
YOU'RE ON AN ERRAND FOR YOUR MUMMY, HUH.
AH!
NOT SURE?
WELL, I'M NOT REALLY SURE.
IT'S FOR MUMMY.
SO WE'RE GOING TO BUY MUMMY'S FAVOURITE CHOCOLATE AND GET HER BACK.
OH MY...
MUMMY LEFT HOME,
UGH...
THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST COME HERE WITH MAKOTO?


APPARENTLY SHE'S BEEN BUYING CHOCOLATE FROM HERE, SO I WAS HOPING TO CROSS PATHS.
...SHE WROTE ME A LETTER AND LEFT A FEW DAYS AGO.
YOU'RE STILL STUDYING TO BE A LAWYER?
THAT'S THE PROBLEM!
...I THINK SHE DID,
BUT IT'S HARD TO BRING MYSELF TO GO THERE.
MAYBE SHE WENT BACK TO HER PARENTS' PLACE?
OH, THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN COMING AROUND MY SHOP SO OFTEN.
I'M SORRY.

I TOLD HER
I WAS GOING TO GIVE UP ON THAT AND START WORKING...
.....
WHY DO WOMEN LEAVE SO EASILY?
IN MY CASE, MY FATHER LEFT.
WHAT? I THOUGHT HE CAME BACK? HE'S RUNNING THIS SHOP, RIGHT?
LIKE I KNOW.
HAND-MADE CHOCO-LATES.

WE'RE HAVING A CLASS ON MAKING CHOCOLATES TOMORROW.
Handmade Chocolates
Tastes like a pro
WHY DON'T YOU COME JOIN US? YOU TOO, CHIYOKO!
NO THANKS!
I WILL NOT!
WHY DON'T YOU MAKE HER SOME?
NEXT WEEK IS VALENTINE'S.
HUH...?
I WANT TO MAKE HEART-SHAPED CHOCOLATES.
WHY ME TOO..?

HEART-SHAPED, HUH. THAT'S EMBARRASSING.
IT'S NOT EMBARRASSING AT ALL.
THE HEART SHAPE HAS YOUR LOVE FOR HER POURED INTO IT.
GARNISH WITH LEMON ZEST HERE AND THERE, AND IT WILL SPARK HER MEMORIES.
ISN'T THAT LAYING IT ON THICK...?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
IT'S A DAY WHERE YOU CAN PROFESS YOUR LOVE, AND IT HAPPENS JUST ONCE A YEAR.
...YEAH.

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S MAKE A LOT!
When I told her I quit my job to become a lawyer,
she smiled and said, "that's a good idea".
She said to leave the finances up to her.
But after two years I saw her smile fading.
She was also sighing a lot
and
THE LETTER SHE LEFT ON THE TABLE SAID, "PLEASE GIVE ME SOME TIME".
I WONDER HOW MUCH OF HER TIME I WASTED.
then she left.

I can't give her back that time,
but if I can repay her
with something else, then—
Did Mum
OH, CAN I? FOR MY HUSBAND...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY, MADAM?
HELLO.
WELCOME.
OH MY, YOU'RE DOING HANDMADE CHOCOLATE?! IT LOOKS FUN!

want to revive this shop
You do it like this.
It's sour
so she could see it full of life again before she died?
If that's true,

then I can't do it.
fwip
In her last moment
I put space between us
The only thing that I can do is—
CHIYOKO!

I HEARD THAT YOU LEFT, SO...
OH...
I WAS SURPRISED TO GET A CALL FROM YOU.
WHAT HAPPENED?
OF COURSE YOU WOULD GET MAD—
THAT'S NOT IT!
...I'M NOT ANGRY.
MEN ARE SO FICKLE! WHAT WAS THE POINT OF YOU SUPPORTING THE FAMILY FOR SO LONG?
KEN SAID HE'S GIVING UP ON BECOMING A LAWYER.

"I'll start working."
SO I THINK HE TOLD ME HE'D "GIVE UP" JUST BECAUSE HE SAW I WAS TIRED.
BUT HE'S A GENTLE SOUL,
IF HE TRIED HIS BEST AND DECIDED TO GIVE UP, THAT WOULD BE FINE.
THAT'S WHEN I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE HE'S BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME...
.....
HUH?
BEFORE YOU WIND UP REGRETTING NOT TELLING HIM.
YOU SHOULD TELL HIM HOW YOU FEEL.

YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE... THAT KIND OF REGRET, RIGHT?
I DIDN'T TAKE MY MOTHER'S HAND WHEN SHE WAS ABOUT TO DIE.
Is that it?
Mum,
WELCOME!
now I realize that I regret it...

...ONE...
CHOCO-
LATE...
PL–
The warm chocolate
has slowly melted just a bit
PLEASE.
of my cold, stubborn heart.

Lovely Strange Dark

CHIYOKO CHOCOLAT

BY KUJIRA

CHAPTER 4

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QC: hahhah42

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RECIPE 4

Letter of Resignation

I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
ISN'T THIS A BIT RASH?
I'M TRULY SORRY.

CLANG

.....

THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING.
BOW
.....
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR ME.
MR. OGATA ...
YOU'RE SO SELFISH.

And that's the end of it
Now I can prepare to move forward.
The chocolate
I bought the other day.

MUM.
I'M SORRY
FOR NOT TAKING YOUR HAND THAT DAY.
...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THE LAST TIME I HAD CHOCOLATE.
GRAND-PA?!
MAKE ME SOME TEA, CHIYO.
WHA-
IT'S GONE!!

I THOUGHT YOU HATED CHOCO-LATE?
WHAT WAS THAT?
JEEZ~
WHY'D YOU GO AND EAT IT?
...THE SHOP...
HAHA HA

AREN'T YOU GLAD WE DIDN'T TEAR IT DOWN?

REBELLIOUS GIRL.
Fwahaha
I GUESS SO.
HM?
OH YEAH.
NO, I DON'T.
HER NAME IS CHIYOKO OKABAYASHI ...
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE GIRL MUM RENTED THE SHOP TO, GRANDPA?
OH, OKAY...
RIGHT, I'LL MAKE YOU TEA.
WHY DON'T YOU ASK HER YOURSELF?
So sweet!
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HER.

I COULD, BUT...
She blew me off last time.
THEN I WON'T BE TALKING ABOUT IT EITHER.
IF MS. KIYOKO DIDN'T TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT,
But you know
No,
But
No
Achew!

UGH~ WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SH...
-SNORE
I FELL ASLEEP WHILE I WAS MULLING IT OVER LAST NIGHT...
ON TOP OF THE COVERS ...
UGH——
SNIFF
I'M STILL MULLING OVER IT,
BUT I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO ASK OKABAYASHI.
Cough
Flashback
WHY?!
HOW?!
I WON'T TELL YOU.
I HATE CHOCO-LATE!
IT'D BE SO EMBARRASS-ING!!
UGH! BUT HOW CAN I GO TO HER SHOP AFTER EVERY-THING I SAID?!
Hup!
I didn't even give her a chance to explain.
...OH WELL ...
I GUESS I'LL HIRE A DETECTIVE AND...
Cough
Desperate

HOW ABOUT YOU QUIT POPPING UP BEHIND ME!
ACK!
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING SQUATS AND YELLING FOR?
IT WAS PAYDAY AT MY SIDE JOB, SO I'M ABOUT TO BUY MY WIFE SOME CHOCOLATE.
YAY!
...SO YOU PICKED UP PART-TIME WORK.
.....
...UHH...
SO WAIT, HOW ABOUT YOU? YOU HAVE THE DAY OFF?

MY WIFE CAME BACK BECAUSE OF YOU.
KEN.
I'LL LEND YOU MY EAR, IF YOU WANT.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
THIS TIME I CAN HELP YOU.
.....
WELL...
nod
nod

HUH?
LET'S GO ASK HER!
OKAY!
WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING, KEN?!
SHE WOULDN'T ANSWER ME WHEN I GOT WORKED UP AND BOMBARDED HER WITH QUESTIONS!
IT'S ABOUT YOUR PARENTS.
OF COURSE YOU GOT WORKED UP.

NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU GET,
IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE THEIR CHILD.
SO BE FIRM AND ASK HER WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOUR PARENTS.
HEY, CHIYOKO.
STOP

DAD...?
Am I hallucinating
because of my fever?
AH!

MS. CHIYOKO?!
DAD?!
GRAB
He's not Dad...
JEEZ. SHE FOUND OUT, SIS.
WHY... ARE YOU HERE?
PANT
PANT
SIS...?
...But...

MINORI OKABA-YASHI.
THIS IS MY LITTLE BROTHER,
He looks like...
YOUR BROTH-ER...

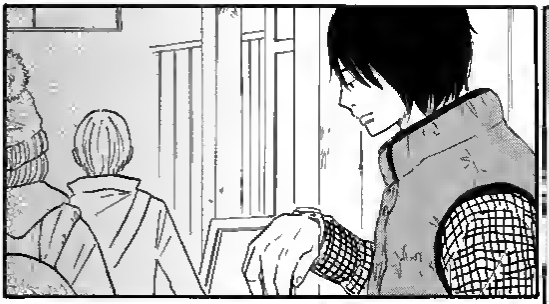
AND
Why?
HE'S... YOUR LITTLE BROTHER TOO, MS. CHIYOKO.
OH.
SO NOW...
CHIYOKO!

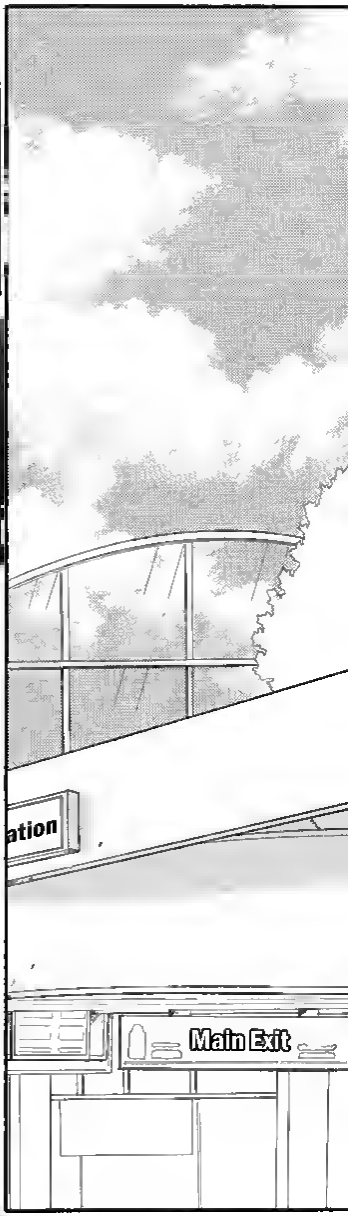
MS. CHI-YOKO!
I'm hearing things?
CHIYOKO! HANG IN THERE.
AH.
cold
...IT FEELS NICE AND COLD.
(COUCH)
(COUCH)
I CAN SMELL A HINT OF CHOCO-LATE.
THESE COOL HANDS ARE JUST RIGHT FOR MAKING CHOCOLATE.
Magical hands.

HAHA
!
JUMP
OH, YOU WOKE UP.
DAD!
...WHAT?
I...
DO I LOOK THAT MUCH LIKE DAD? ENOUGH THAT YOU'D MIX US UP?
STARE

I DON'T KNOW.
HEH.
YOU THINK WE'RE ALIKE?
BEING SIBLINGS AND ALL.
H-
HOW WOULD I KNOW! YOU JUST SUDDENLY TELL ME I'VE GOT A BROTHER-
I CAN'T JUST ACCEPT THAT!
I GUESS NOT...
THEN, I'VE GOT SOMEONE FOR YOU TO MEET.
HUH?

CHIYO-KO!
HEY SIS, MR. GLASSES! KUBOTA'S AWAKE.
WHO?!
YOU'LL FIND OUT WHEN YOU GET THERE.
ELEVEN O'CLOCK,
IN FRONT OF THE STATION THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW. IF YOU WANT TO MEET THEM, BE THERE.





...WELL THEN, LET'S GO.

Lovely Strange Dark
CHIYOKO CHOCOLAT
BY KUJIRA
CHAPTER 5
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RECIPE 5

WELL THEN,
LET'S GO.
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
I TOLD YOU, YOU'LL FIND OUT WHEN WE GET THERE.
OH YEAH,
HOLD THIS.
?

WHOA!
WHAT IS THIS? IT'S HEAVY.
HEAVY
IT SMELLS LIKE CACAO...?
HEY, DON'T HOLD IT LIKE THAT!
YOUR BODY HEAT WILL MELT IT.
USE THE HANDLE!
.....

HOW'S YOUR COLD? ALL GOOD?
OH... I'VE JUST GOT A LITTLE COUGH NOW.
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU OR WHATEVER. I JUST DON'T WANT TO CATCH IT.
.....

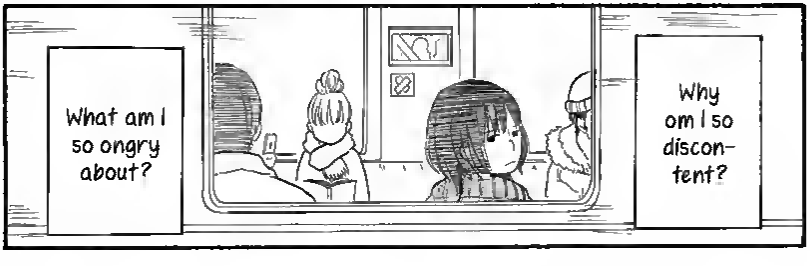
...
WHAT?
...HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN DAD LEFT?
SHOES OFF.
AMAZING THAT YOU CAN REMEMBER THAT FAR BACK.
HUH!
I WAS FIVE... OR SIX.

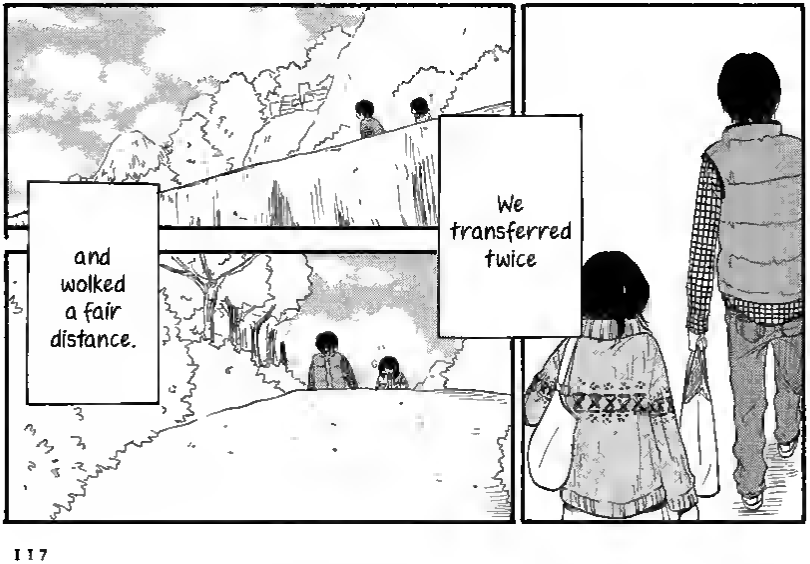
I WAS THINKING ...
THAT MAYBE MEMORIES
GET PRETTIER THE OLDER THEY ARE.
PRET-TIER...?
YEAH.
THINGS HURT "NOW", SO WE THINK THAT THE "PAST" WAS BETTER AND PRETTY IT UP TO SUIT OUR NEEDS.
SO WE CLING TO THE NOTION THAT THE PAST THAT WAS PROBABLY BETTER, RIGHT?
...LIKE MY SISTER,
AND YOUR MUM.

AND EVEN YOU, CHIYOKO.
!
WHAT?
WHY ME TOO...?!
I'M NOT PRETTYING ANYTHING UP!
CHIYOKO, WE'RE ON THE TRAIN.
OH.

HAHA HA!
fump
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO IMMATURE?
.....
ISN'T THAT WHY
YOU HAVE A PERMANENT CREASE BETWEEN YOUR EYEBROWS?
.....

TAP
I....
ALWAYS LOOK THIS WAY?


What am I so angry about?
Why am I so discontent?


We transferred twice
and walked a fair distance.

We finally arrived at—
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
I JUST GOT OVER MY COLD ...
WE'RE HERE.
...A NURSING HOME...?
Sunflower Nursing Home
GO FOR IT...?
WE'LL BE HANDING THOSE OUT. GO FOR IT.
WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
HI, I'M OKABAYASHI.

EVERYONE, THESE TWO BROUGHT YOU SOME TEA SNACKS. THEY'LL BE HANDING THEM OUT NOW.
HELLO.
OH, S-SORRY.
HERE YOU GO.
COME ON, CHIYOKO.
H-HERE YOU ARE.
OH?
I ALSO HAVE
HERE YOU GO.

A DAUGHTER NAMED "CHIYOKO". SHE'S TURNING FIVE.
SHE CRIES AT NIGHT BECAUSE SHE'S SCARED OF A DARK SPOT ON THE CEILING.
OH MY.
WHEN I MAKE HER HOT CHOCOLATE,
HUH?
DA...
SHE SMILES
WITH CHOCOLATE ALL OVER HER MOUTH.

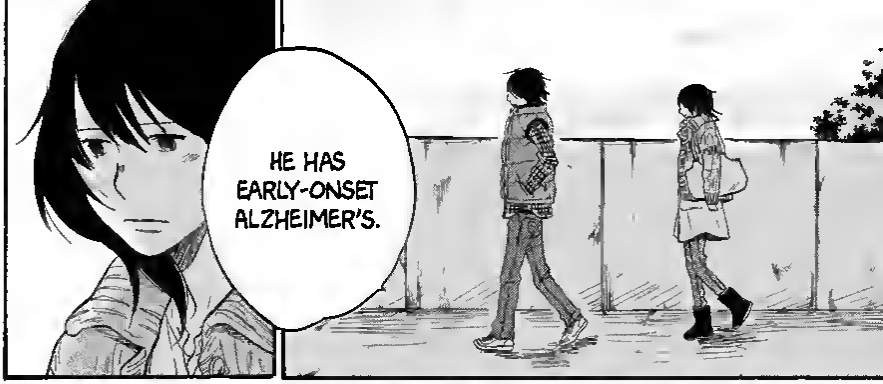
U—
...YES?
UM...
I...
UM...
W-WHY ...
AH!
MISS?
WHAT'S WRONG?

DON'T CRY... YOU'LL UPSET EVERYONE.
JUST SMILE.
D...
DAD...
DA...
I-I WANT SOME HOT CHOCOLATE...
... OKAY.
GOT IT.

OH!
I NEED TO MAKE HOT CHOCO-LATE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, MR. KUBOTA? LET'S SIT DOWN.
I'LL MAKE SOME RIGHT NOW.

ARE YOU OKAY?
OH NO, WHAT'S WRONG?

THANK GOD... HE'S ALIVE.
...THANK GOD.


HE HAS EARLY-ONSET ALZHEIMER'S.

IT ALL HAPPENED BEFORE I WAS BORN,
SO I DON'T REALLY KNOW THE DETAILS.

MY MOM AND MY SISTER'S DAD HAD BEEN FRIENDS WITH OUR DAD SINCE CONFECTIONARY SCHOOL.

MY SISTER'S DAD DIED IN AN ACCIDENT WHEN SHE WAS AROUND EIGHT.
WHAT?!
MY MUM WAS GRIEVING,
AND OUR DAD WAS THERE TO COMFORT HER.
AFTER A WHILE
I WOUND UP IN HER BELLY.
OF COURSE, YOU WERE ALREADY BORN, CHIYOKO.

IT IS.
...YEAH,
THAT'S AWFUL.
.....
THE TWO OF THEM FOR BEING TOGETHER
THAT'S WHY YOUR MUM COULD NEVER FORGIVE
THAT MEANS
HEY!
HOLD IT!
...WAIT!

THEY TOLD HER ABOUT IT
MY MUM KNEW?!
BEFORE I WAS BORN.

...AND WHAT ABOUT HIS ILL-NESS?
WELL,
HIS FIRST SYMPTOMS APPEARED AFTER I WAS BORN, WHEN DAD HAD ALREADY LEFT YOUR HOUSE.
...HE PROBABLY COULDN'T HAVE GONE BACK TO YOU
EVEN IF HE HAD WANTED TO.
I FIGURE HIS FEELINGS ABOUT THAT

ARE WHY YOU'RE STILL FIVE YEARS OLD IN HIS MIND, CHIYOKO.
...IT'S KIND OF SAD, RIGHT?
I MEAN, I'M HERE,
...I'M NOT
FIVE ANY-MORE...
I'm
AND YOU AREN'T FIVE ANYMORE.

living in the "now".
...EVEN IF YOUR MEMORIES ARE PRETTIED UP,
IF THEY CAN ENCOURAGE YOU TO MOVE FORWARD, ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING?
...YEAH.

HEY!
WHAT?
DOES YOUR SISTER STAY AT THE SHOP AFTER SHE CLOSES UP?
NO, SHE GOES HOME AFTER CLOSING. WHY?
...WHAT ARE YOU YELLING FOR?
ALL RIGHT!
YEAH, I GUESS SO.

HOW ABOUT THE KEY? DO YOU HAVE ONE?
...I DO... WHY?
IS THERE LEFTOVER CHOCO-LATE?
THEY'RE NEVER SOLD OUT.
AFTER SHE CLOSES UP, LET ME IN!
WHAT?!
WHAAT?!
OKAY, LET'S RUN FOR IT!

...AND? IS SHE STILL THERE?
SHE'S GONE HOME.
SO WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING, CHIYOKO?
I'LL BUY ONE OF EACH KIND OF CHOCOLATE IN THIS STORE!

?
AND GET ME A PEN AND PAPER.
DOESN'T MATTER. GRAB THEM FOR ME!
HUH?! THERE'S AT LEAST 40 DIFFERENT KINDS.

...WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?
GRAB
I'M GOING TO EAT THEM ALL.
WHAAT?!

HERE.

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RECIPE 6

I'M GOING TO EAT THEM ALL.
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?

WHAAAT ?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE GOING TO EAT THEM ALL? THAT'S WAY TOO MUCH!
bite
I'LL GET THROUGH THEM.
I WANT TO TAKE BACK THE LAST 20 YEARS
bite
THAT MY FATHER HAS BEEN GONE.

.....
WELL, BE SURE TO FINISH BEFORE THE STORE OPENS.

HEY,
SORRY FOR DISTURBING YOU WHILE YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT,
BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER YOU EAT EACH ONE?
THE QUIZ.

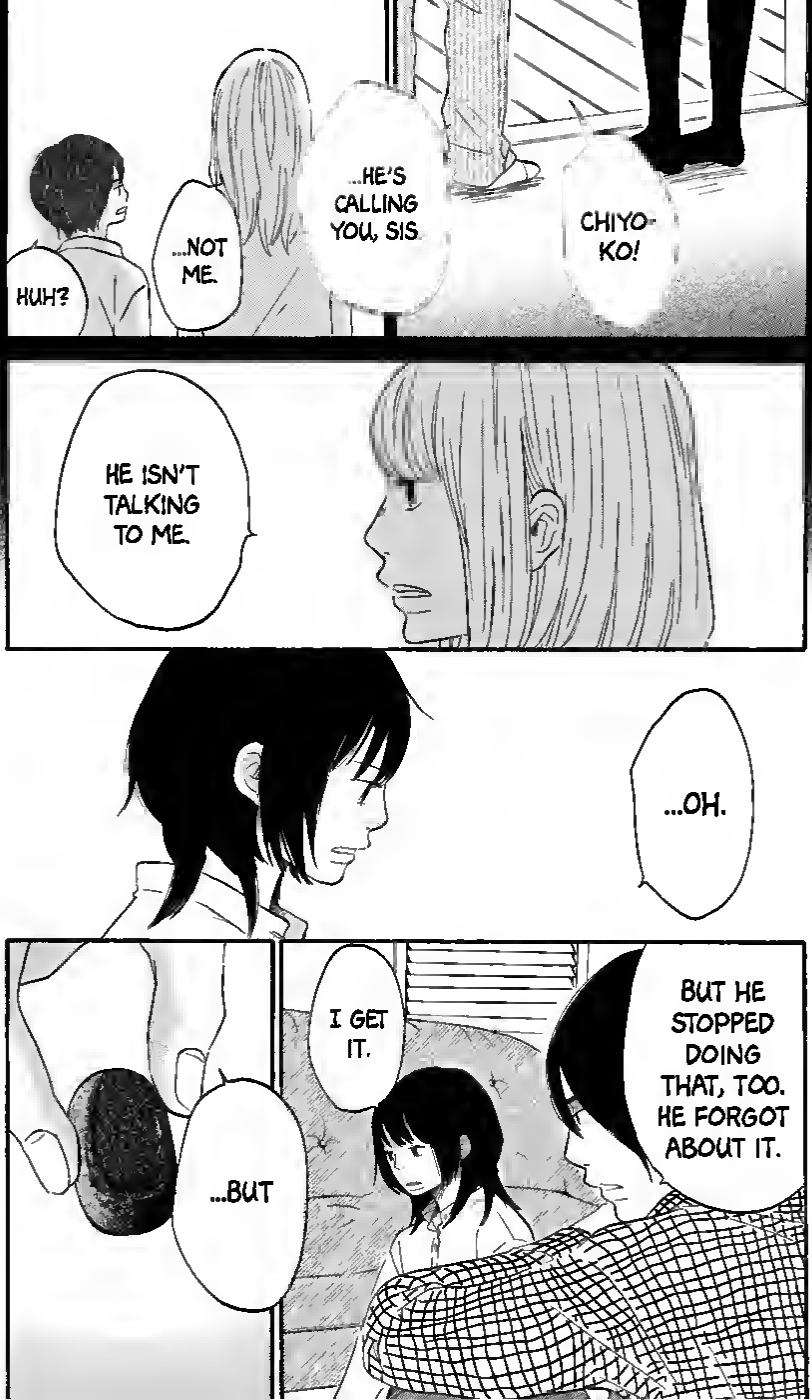
QUIZ?
...OUR SHOP'S CHOCOLATE
IS MADE BY BLENDING THREE DIFFERENT CHOCOLATES, RIGHT?
YEAH.
Right
THE MIXTURE ALSO CHANGES DEPENDING ON THE GANACHE.
CHI-YOKO.
CHI-YOKO.
WHAT'S IN THIS CHOCOLATE?
CAN I EAT IT?
YEAH, GO AHEAD.

VALRHONA 4,
WEISS 3,
AND CACAO
VALLEY 3.

TH-
THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU'RE AMAZING, CHIYOKO.
HOW DID YOU KNOW?!
HE ALWAYS
PLAYED GAMES LIKE THIS WITH ME.

OH! SO THAT'S WHY THOSE RECIPES ARE...
SOMETIMES I ALSO THOUGHT UP NEW IDEAS FOR MIXES.
AT FIVE YEARS OLD?!
...IT WAS FUN.
IT MADE ME HAPPY WHEN HE SAID I DID GOOD.
...NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT,
DAD DID THE SAME THING.
WHAT?
I ALWAYS WALKED AROUND THE KITCHEN
AND GOT SCOLDED BY MY MUM FOR DISTURBING HIM...

MITSU-
RU!!
CHI-
YOKO!
CHI-
YOKO!
WITH MY
SISTER.
COME OVER
HERE.
TRY
GUESSING WHICH
CHOCOLATE WAS
USED TO MAKE
THIS ONE.


HUH?
...NOT ME.
...HE'S CALLING YOU, SIS.
CHIYO-KO!
HE ISN'T TALKING TO ME.
...OH.
...BUT
I GET IT.
BUT HE STOPPED DOING THAT, TOO. HE FORGOT ABOUT IT.

I REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
...YEAH.
I REMEMBER MUM CLOSING OFF HER HEART.
I REMEMBER HIM LEAVING.
All of it.
All of it.
I'll melt it all inside of me.
Even if we only spent
five or six years as a family.
I won't forget
those happy days.
HM?

THE LIGHT'S ON.
... MINO-RU?
YOU THERE, MINORU?
MINO...
YES—
I FINISHED THEM ALL!

I REALLY DO
OH.
LOVE CHOCOLATE!
.....

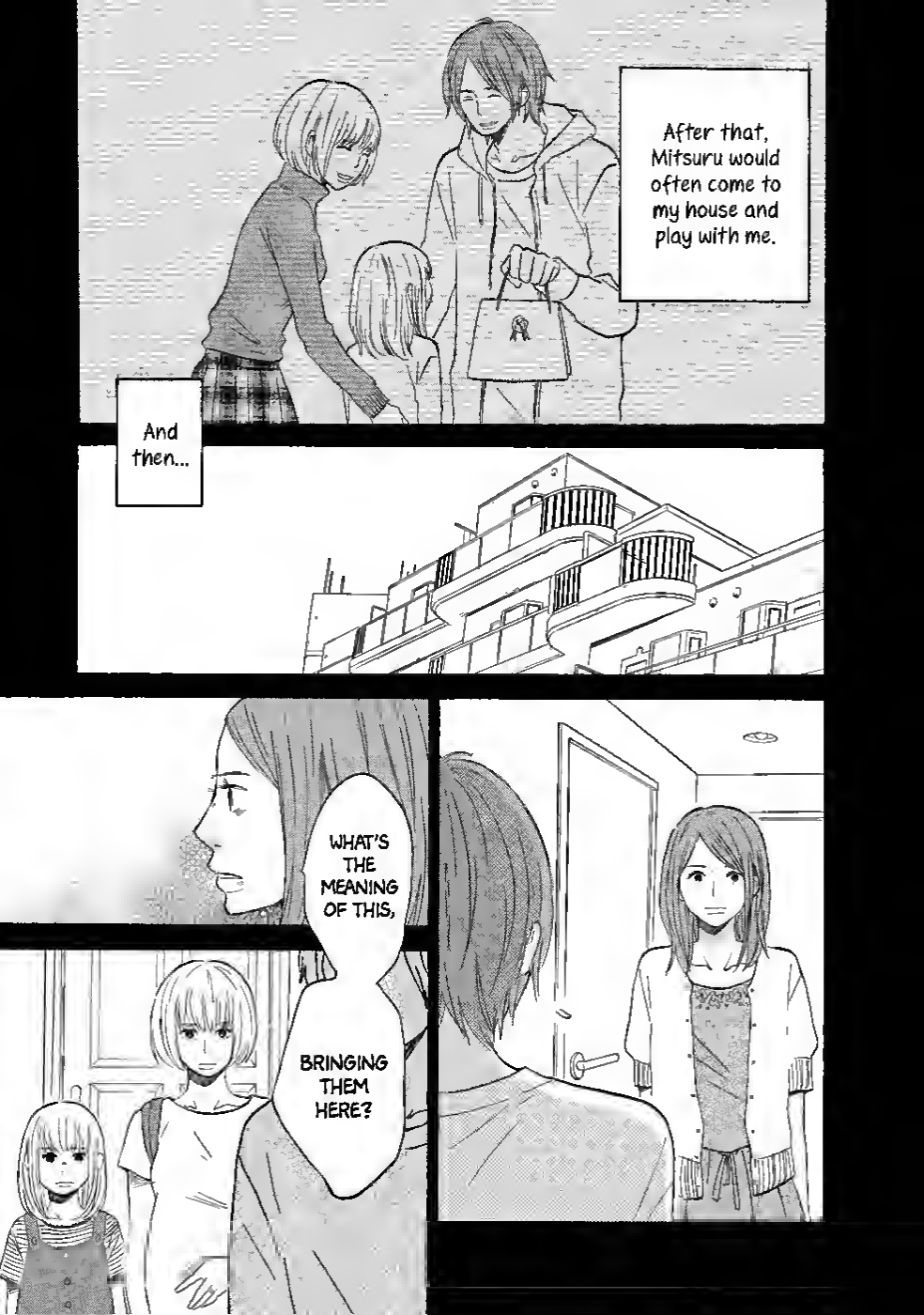
HMM?
S-SORRY FOR IMPOSING!
I FORCED MINORU TO—
JUMP
...SIS?
slide
MS. OKABA-YASHI?!
I'M SORRY.

HUH?
...MY MOTHER ...
SHE WAS THE ONE WHO BROKE APART YOUR FAMILY.
I'LL

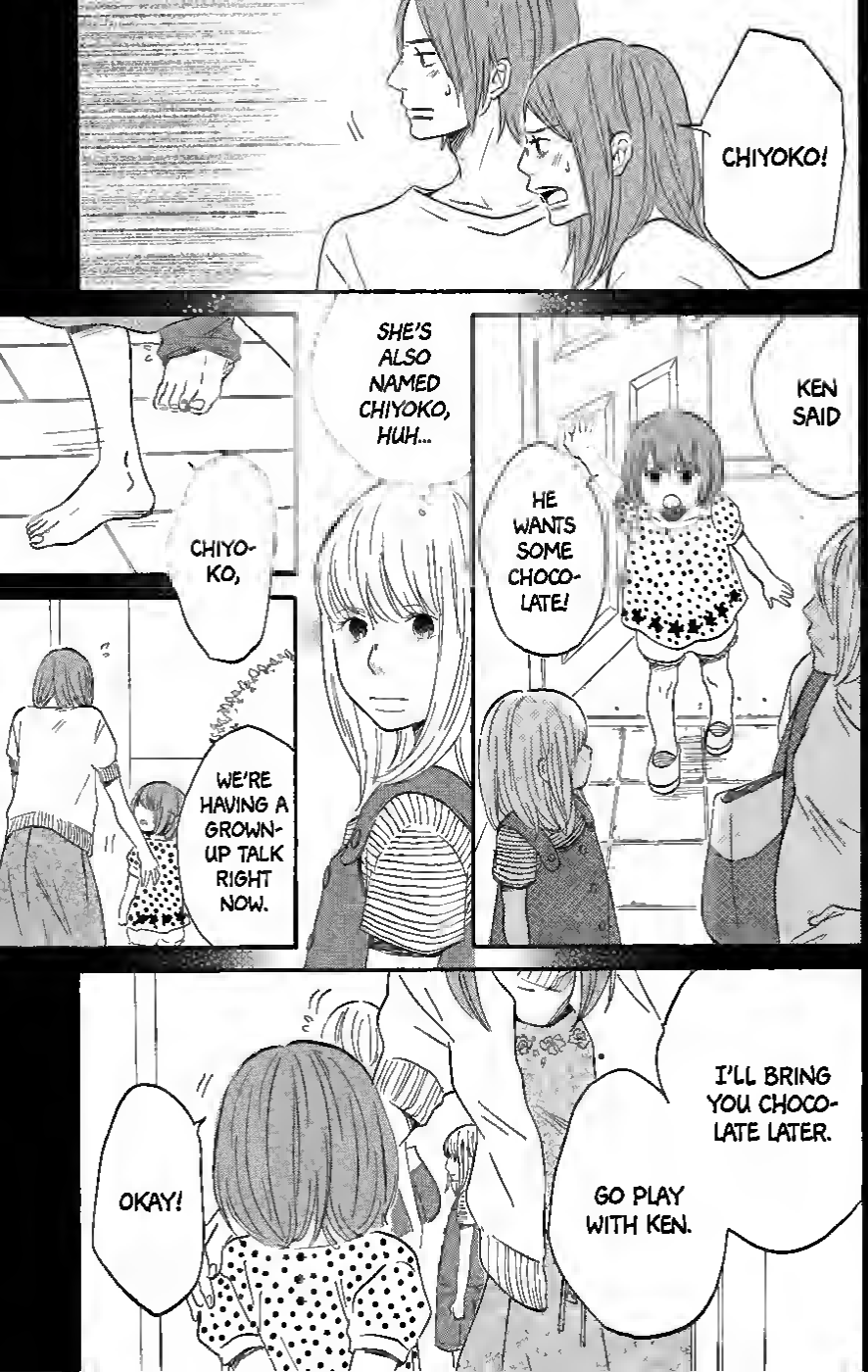
TELL YOU EVERYTHING!
IT ALL STARTED
AFTER MY FATHER DIED.

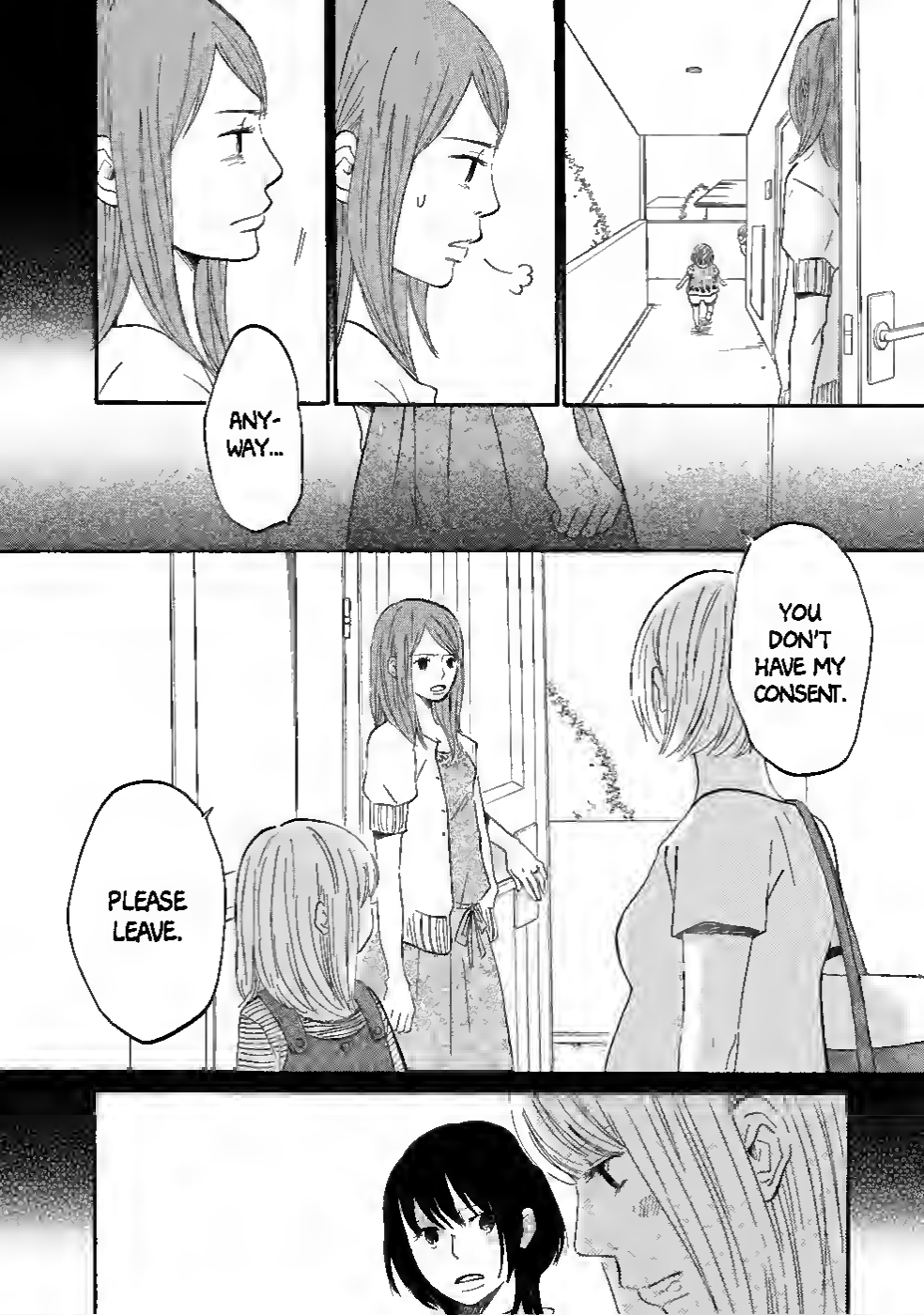
I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD.
I HEARD HE WAS IN AN ACCIDENT DURING A BUSINESS TRIP.
AND HIS DAUGHTER IS STILL SO YOUNG, TOO. I FEEL SO BAD FOR THEM...
KUBOTA.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

THANK YOU FOR COMING.
I'M HERE IF YOU NEED ANYTHING.
HE SMELLS THE SAME AS DAD.
LIKE CHOCOLATE.

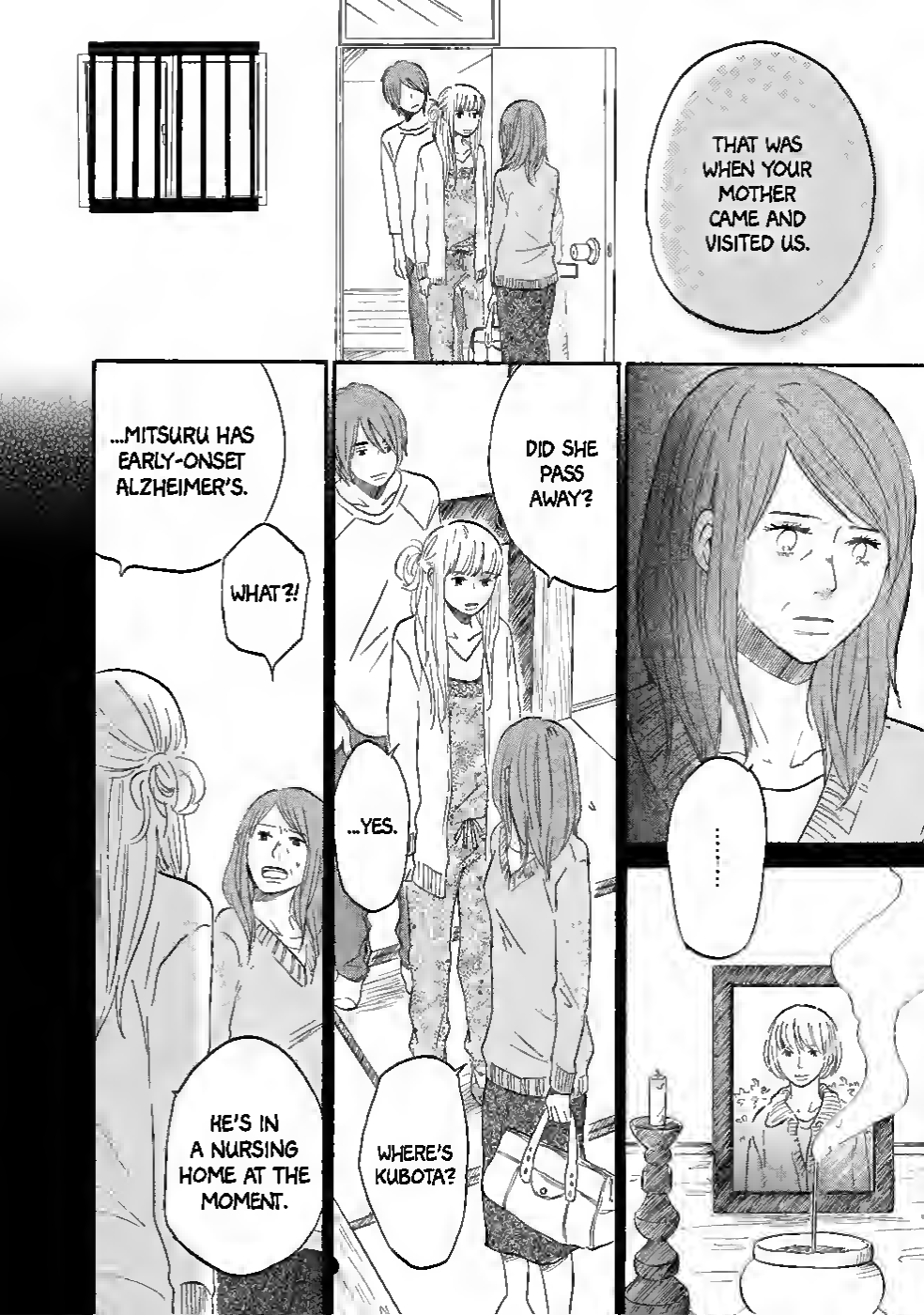

After that, Mitsuru would often come to my house and play with me.
And then...
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS,
BRINGING THEM HERE?

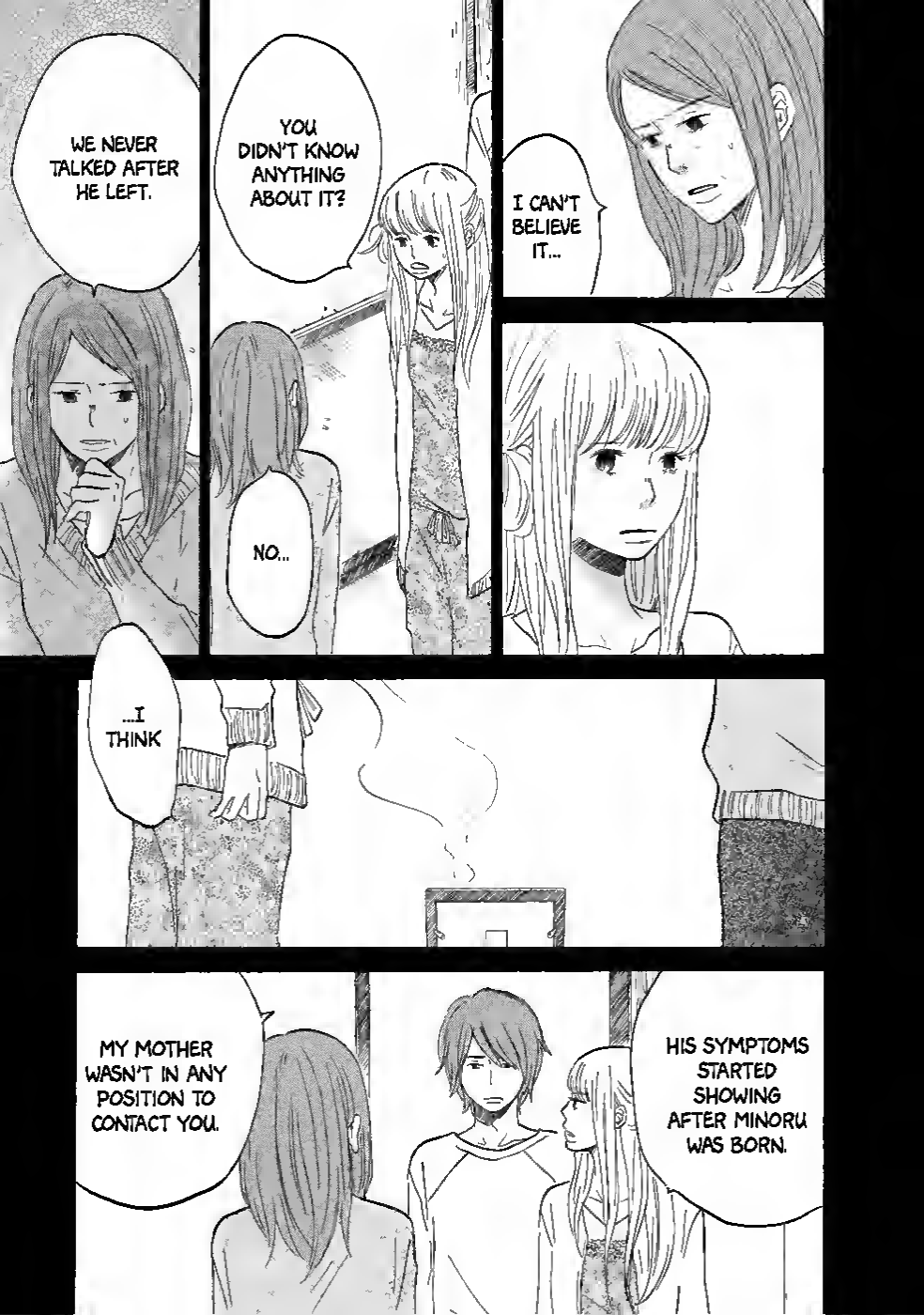
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME. SO WHAT IF SHE'S GOING TO DELIVER?
I'M NOT LEAVING YOU.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WANT TO LEAVE US JUST BECAUSE YOU GOT HER PREGNANT...
...I'M SORRY...
CHIYOKO IS ALSO YOUR CHILD, YOU KNOW?!
CHIYO-KO?
MUUUM~
CLACK


CHIYOKO!
KEN SAID
HE WANTS SOME CHOCO-LATE!
SHE'S ALSO NAMED CHIYOKO, HUH...
CHIYO-KO,
WE'RE HAVING A GROWN-UP TALK RIGHT NOW.
I'LL BRING YOU CHOCO-LATE LATER.
GO PLAY WITH KEN.
OKAY!


ANY-WAY...
YOU DON'T HAVE MY CONSENT.
PLEASE LEAVE.

AFTER THAT,
MITSURU CLOSED THE SHOP AND CAME TO LIVE WITH US.
I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.
IT WAS ONLY A BRIEF MOMENT.
OUR HAPPY DAYS DIDN'T LAST.
BUT
MITSURU WAS IN THE FIRST STAGES OF EARLY-ONSET ALZHEIMER'S... AND MY MOTHER WORKED WHILE CARING FOR HIM.
SHE WOUND UP GETTING SICK, AND PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR.


THAT WAS WHEN YOUR MOTHER CAME AND VISITED US.
DID SHE PASS AWAY?
...YES.
WHERE'S KUBOTA?
...MITSURU HAS EARLY-ONSET ALZHEIMER'S.
WHAT?!
HE'S IN A NURSING HOME AT THE MOMENT.
.....


WE NEVER TALKED AFTER HE LEFT.
YOU DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
NO...
...I THINK
MY MOTHER WASN'T IN ANY POSITION TO CONTACT YOU.
HIS SYMPTOMS STARTED SHOWING AFTER MINORU WAS BORN.

AND... I DOUBT THEY THOUGHT YOU WOULD RESPOND IF THEY REACHED OUT...
.....
I CAME HERE TODAY TO ACCEPT HIS DIVORCE REQUEST.
WHAT ...?
I SHOULD HAVE COME SOONER...
AND
TO ASK HIM TO LOOK AFTER OUR DAUGHTER WHEN I DIE.
WHEN YOU DIE...?

I'M NOT IN ANY POSITION TO ASK YOU FOR FAVOURS.
...I... DON'T HAVE MUCH LONGER TO LIVE.
BUT I HAVE A REQUEST.
"FOR CHIYOKO'S SAKE, PLEASE FILL THE STORE WITH CHOCOLATE
FROM THE RECIPES THAT HE AND CHIYOKO MADE."

Chiyoko's Chocolates
"PLEASE PROTECT THE CHOCOLATE
THAT CHIYOKO LOVES."
"I'M SO SORRY FOR EVERYTHING, CHIYOKO."

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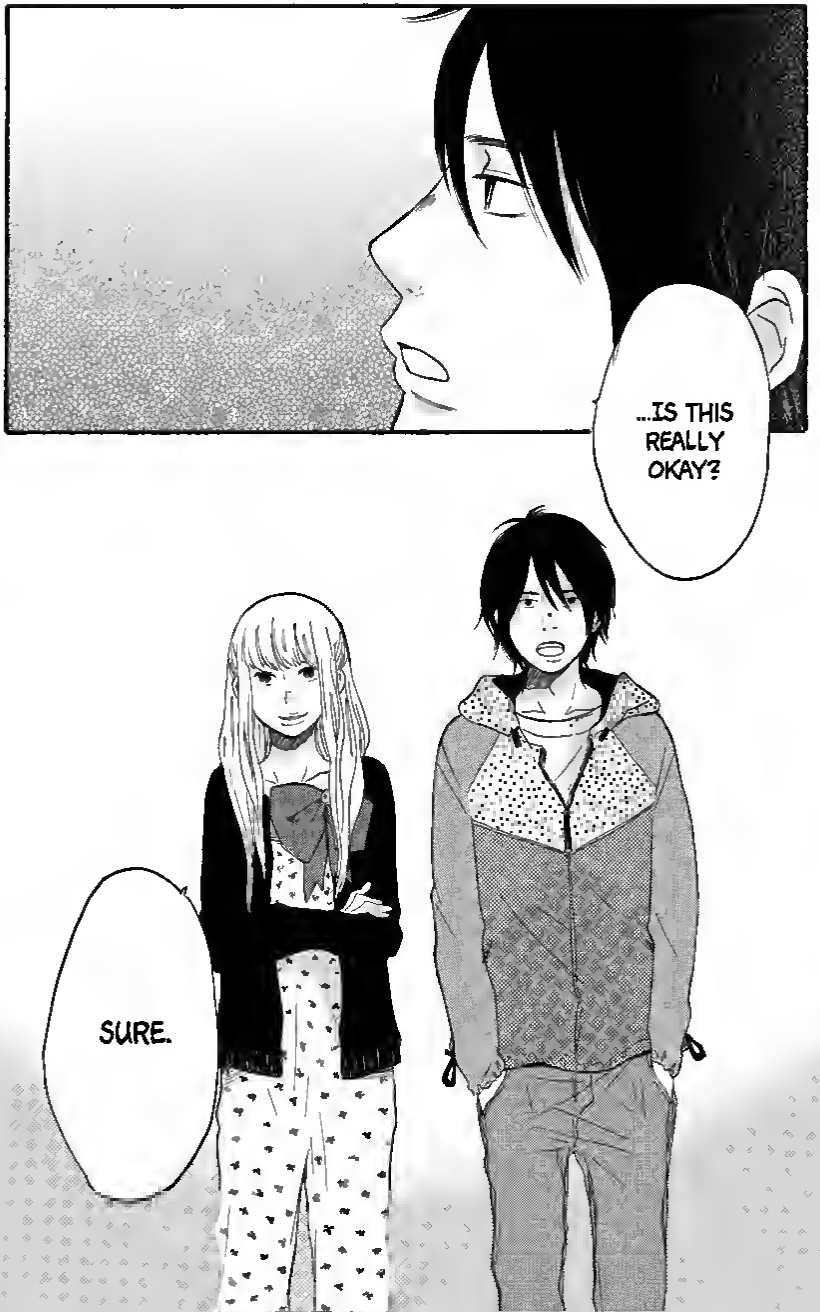
RECIPE 7


...IS THIS REALLY OKAY?
SURE.

IT'S WHAT THE OWNER WANTED.

Chiyoko's Chocolates
WHAT'S THIS...?
RECIPES ...?
THE RECIPES.
shuffle
Chiyoko's Chocolates
CAFÉ OLÉ,
CIT-RON...
shuffle
Chiyoko's Chocolates

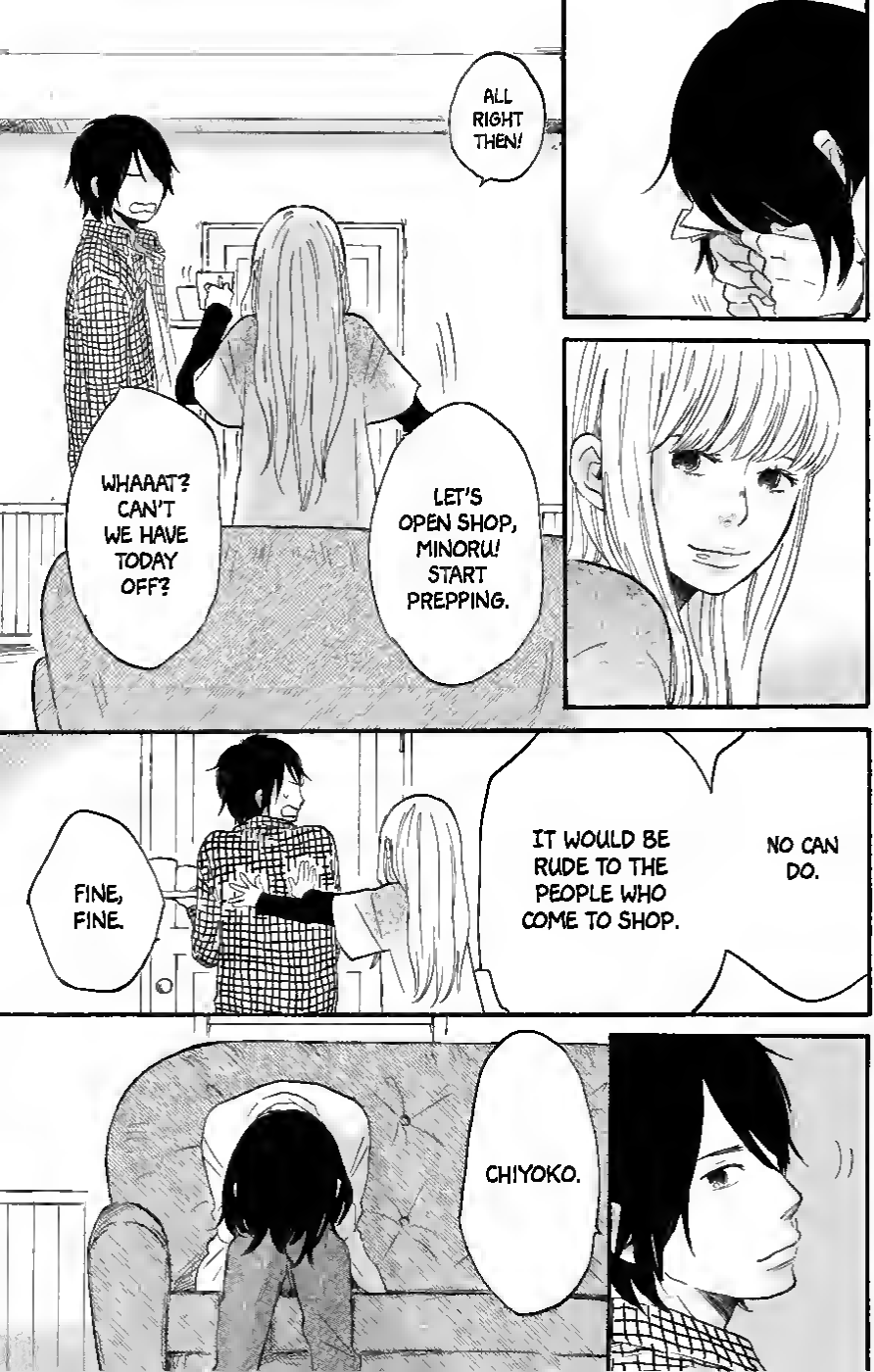
THESE ARE...
OH,
YOU FIGURED IT OUT?
THESE...
ALL THE RECIPES ON THESE...
AREN'T THEY

THE CHOCOLATES
IN THE STORE...?
YES.

AND THE CHOCOLATE MIXES YOU CREATED TOGETHER.
APPARENTLY, MITSURU WAS WRITING DOWN ALL THE CHOCOLATES THAT YOU LIKED
K
WAS MEANT TO RECREATE THE CHOCOLATES YOU TWO MADE.
THIS SHOP
MS. KIYOKO WHO ASKED US TO DO IT.
IT WAS
AND

WHY...?
.....
WE WANTED TO DISPEL
THIS RIGHT HERE.
THE DEEP-ROOTED
WRINKLE BETWEEN YOUR EYE-BROWS,
AND YOUR SOUR FACE.

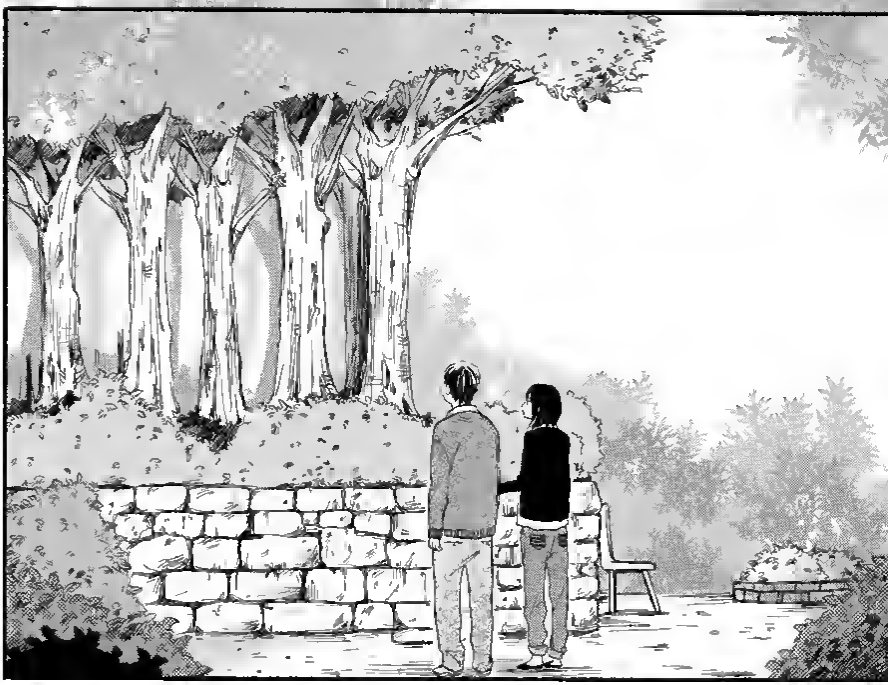
BOTH ME
AND YOUR MOTHER.
AH!
ARE YOU OKAY, CHIYOKO?!
GUZU
MU...

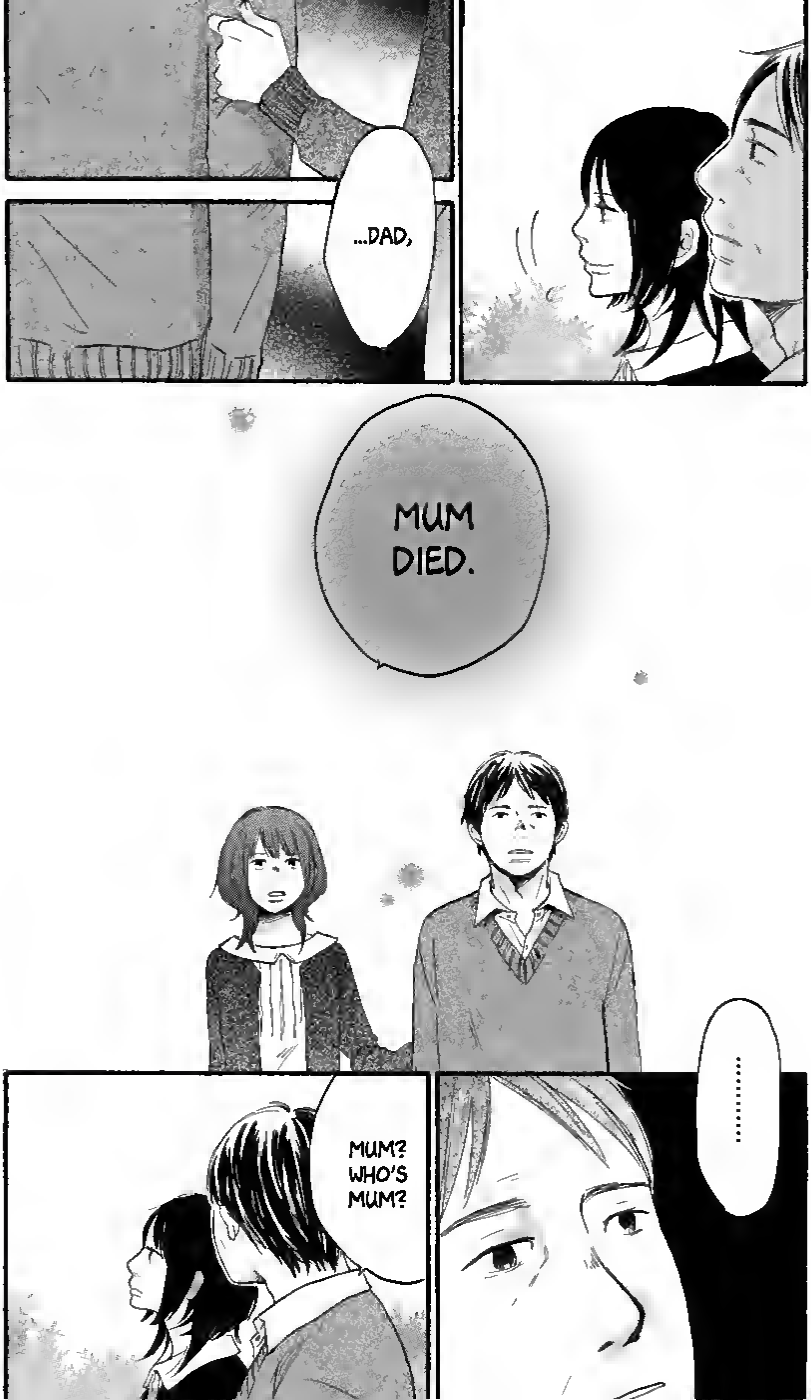

ALL RIGHT THEN!
WHAAAT? CAN'T WE HAVE TODAY OFF?
LET'S OPEN SHOP, MINORU! START PREPPING.
FINE, FINE.
IT WOULD BE RUDE TO THE PEOPLE WHO COME TO SHOP.
NO CAN DO.
CHIYOKO.

CAN HAVE THAT BACK.
YOU
IT'S YOURS.
BUT...
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT WITH IT.
clack
OH...
You should do what you want, Chiyoko. It's your life.

Those words were
all Mum could say.
NOW I UNDER-STAND...
NOW I GET IT.
What
Chiyoko's Chocolates

should I do?




...DAD,
MUM DIED.
MUM? WHO'S MUM?
.....

THAT'S ALL I'VE BEEN ABLE TO THINK ABOUT LATELY...
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I KEEP THINKING I SHOULD HAVE TALKED TO MUM MORE, SUPPORTED HER MORE.
MORE AND MORE AND MORE... I COULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING MORE.

I'VE REALISED THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT ME.
BUT I'M FILLED WITH REGRET AGAIN WHEN I THINK HOW LONG IT TOOK ME TO REALISE THAT.
Even after I decide I "love" something, I waver.
I start thinking that there's something missing...
and look back and forth
I'M GOING ROUND AND ROUND IN CIRCLES, THINKING IT OVER.
deep down in my heart.

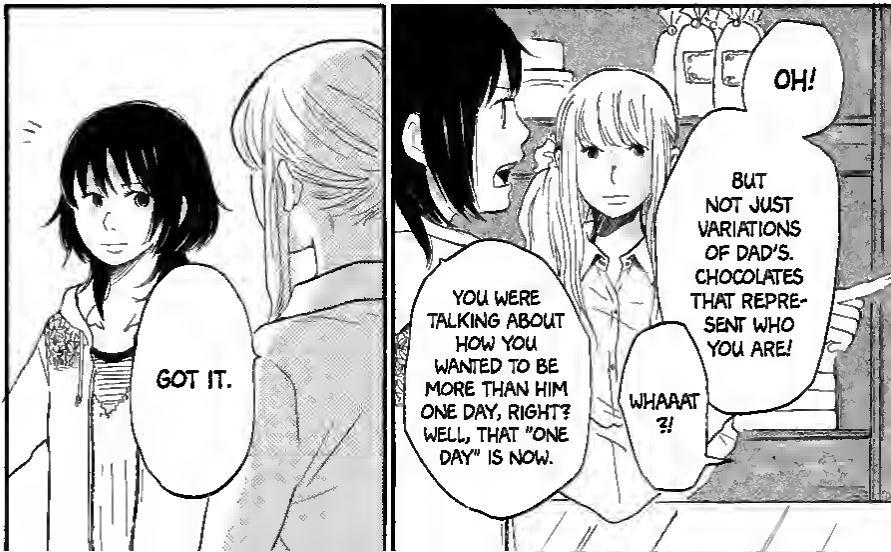
THAT'S GOOD.
WHAT...?
YOU FIGURED IT OUT,
THAT'S A GOOD THING, YUP.
EVEN IF IT TOOK YOU A LONG TIME.
SWISH
...OH.

YOU SHOULD GO HOME TOO, YOUNG LADY.
IT'S COLD. THIS OLD MAN HAS TO GO HOME NOW.
I'M SURE YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER WILL GET WORRIED.
YEAH.
If it spills,
THANKS.

you can just make another one.
It's all right now.
YOUR HOME IS THIS WAY, MR. KUBOTA.
Let's head back with your daughter.
DAUGH-TER?
OH!
I'M SORRY!
SEE, YOUR DAUGHTER IS HERE.
HUH? BUT MY DAUGH-TER'S FIVE.
I'M 25 NOW.
YOU DON'T AGE THAT SUDDENLY.

I'll do what I like.
SO,
I'M GOING TO CLOSE THIS SHOP!
CLOSE THE SHOP...?
YEAH, AT THE END OF THIS MONTH
WAIT, WHAT?
WHAT KIND OF IRRESPONSIBLE OWNER ARE YOU?!

I WANT YOU TO THINK UP 30 NEW CHOCOLATE RECIPES RIGHT AWAY.
HUH ...?
MINORU!
YES?
BUT ONLY THE SHOP!
WHAT?


GOT IT.
YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT HOW YOU WANTED TO BE MORE THAN HIM ONE DAY, RIGHT? WELL, THAT "ONE DAY" IS NOW.
WHAAAT ?!
BUT NOT JUST VARIATIONS OF DAD'S. CHOCOLATES THAT REPRESENT WHO YOU ARE!
OH!

EVEN IF THIS SHOP CLOSES
I BELIEVE THERE WILL BE SOMETHING LEFT OF IT.
YEAH!
WELL THEN, I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT.
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON...?
OKAY.
TILL NEXT TIME!
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELVES, BROTHER, SISTER!

Hey, sis...
.....
DID SHE CALL YOU "SISTER"?!
WHAT?!
SISZIZ!
...MIGHT BE NICE HAVING A LITTLE SISTER.
...IS THIS REALLY OKAY?
SURE. IT'S WHAT THE OWNER WANTED.

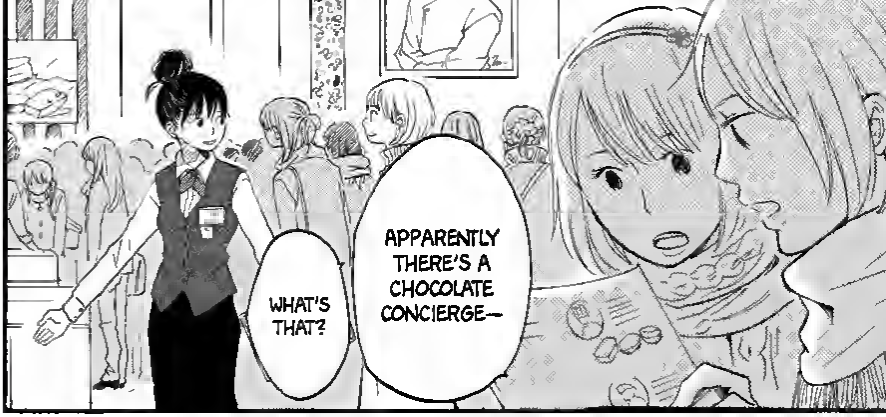
AND SHE SUDDENLY WENT OFF TO FRANCE.
I WONDER IF SHE HAS ANY INTENTION OF COMING BACK.
I KNOW, BUT STILL–
DIDN'T THINK SHE'D BE SO ABRUPT AFTER SHE WORKED THROUGH THINGS.
OF COURSE SHE WILL.
DON'T YOU KNOW?

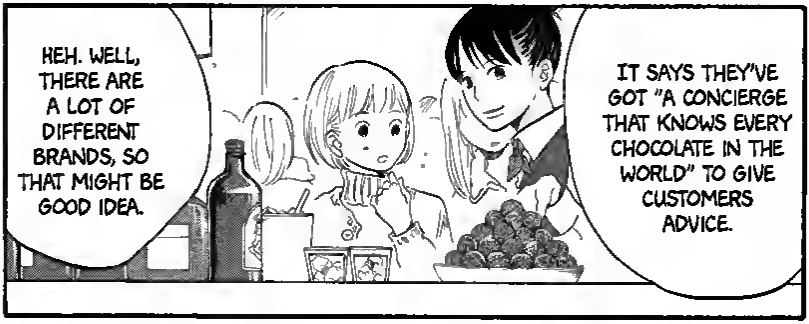
CHOCOLATE HAS THE ABILITY TO MELT YOUR HEART
AND MAKE IT SWEET.
ANYWAY, HAVE YOU COME UP WITH THE RECIPES, MINORU?
NO... NOT YET ...
Valentine Day 2.14
Three years later.

バレンタイン
Valentine
Special Event Space
Valentine
tok
tok
tok
IT'S THIS ONE.

MA'AM,
YOU SAID THAT YOU'RE NOT REALLY FOND OF SWEETS,
SO WHY NOT TRY THIS GATEAU CHOCOLATE WITH GUÉRANDE SALT IN IT?
THE SPRINKLES OF SALT CUT THROUGH THE SWEETNESS
AND ADD ANOTHER LAYER OF EXCITEMENT IT'S ALSO POPULAR TO HAVE IT WITH A DRINK
Chocolate Concierge
Kubota
Chocolate Guide

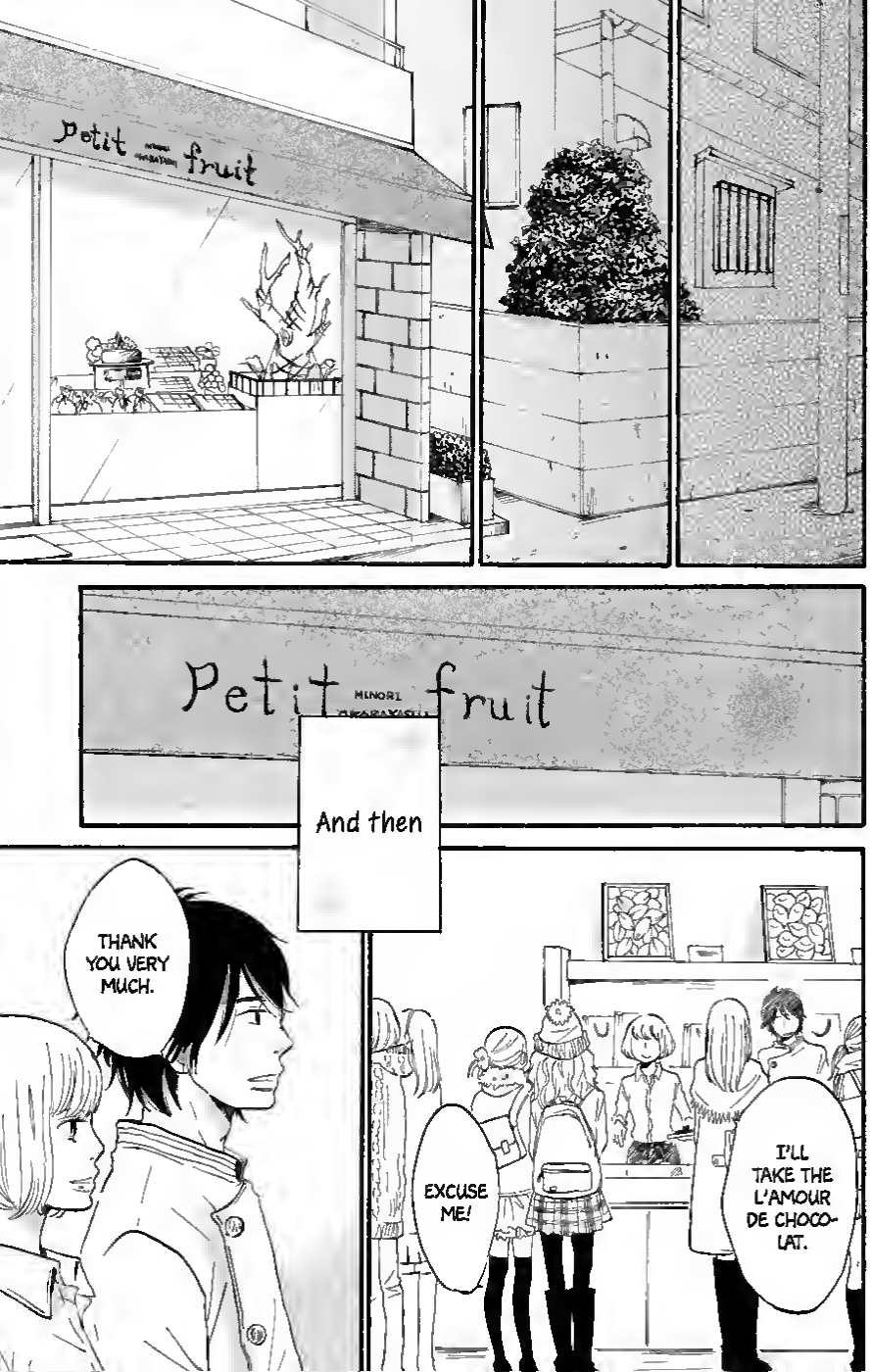
GOOD THING WE FOUND A NICE ONE!
UM... EXCUSE ME.
YES?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
OH... THEN I'LL TAKE THIS ONE.
I want to try it too.
I DON'T KNOW WHICH CHOCOLATE IS GOOD.
THEN LET'S PICK ONE OUT TOGETHER.
UMMM...
FIRST, COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT YOUR PARTNER LIKES?




HEH. WELL, THERE ARE A LOT OF DIFFERENT BRANDS, SO THAT MIGHT BE GOOD IDEA.
IT SAYS THEY'VE GOT "A CONCIERGE THAT KNOWS EVERY CHOCOLATE IN THE WORLD" TO GIVE CUSTOMERS ADVICE.

there is always something left.

Even if it breaks and loses its shape,


Petit fruit
Petit fruit
MINORI HIRAYASU
And then
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
EXCUSE ME!
I'LL TAKE THE L'AMOUR DE CHOCO-LAT.

chi yo co
it becomes a new shape...
WELCOME!

E N D